THE RISE and PROGRESS OF RELIGION in the SOUL:

ILLUSTRATED

In a COURSE of SERIOUS and PRACTICAL ADDRESSES,

SUITED TO

PERSONS of every CHARACTER and CIRCUMSTANCE:

WITH A

Devout MEDITATION or PRAYER added to each CHAPTER.

By *P. DODDRIDGE*, D. D.

Quâ ferat hic Greſſum, Fontes dabit arida Vallis,
Inque cavas Foſſas deplust Agmen Aquæ:
Inſtaurabit Iter Vires; et Numinis Ora
Viſurus Solymæ ſiget in Æde Pedem.
Johnſt. Pſal. lxxxiv. 5, 6.

Warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all Wiſdom, that we may preſent every Man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus. Col. i. 28.

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MDCCXLV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Reverend

Dr. *ISAAC WATTS.*

Reverend and Dear SIR,

WITH the most affectionate Gratitude and Respect, I beg Leave to present to You a Book, which owes its Existence to your Request, its Copiousness to your Plan, and much of its Perspicuity to your Review, and to the Use I made of your Remarks on that Part of it, which your Health and Leisure would permit you to examine. I address it to You, not to beg your Patronage to it, for of that I am already well assured; and much less from any Ambition of attempting your Character, for which, if I were more equal to the Subject, I should think this a very improper Place: But chiefly from a secret Delight, which I find in the Thought of being known to those whom this may reach, as one whom You have honoured, not only with your Friendship, but with so much of your Esteem and Approbation too, as must substantially appear in your committing a Work to me, which You had yourself projected as one of the most considerable Services of your Life.

I HAVE long thought the Love of Popular Applause a Meanness, which a Philosophy far inferior to that of *our Divine Master* might have taught us to conquer. But to be esteemed by eminently Great and Good Men,

to whom we are intimately known, appears to me, not only one of the moſt ſolid Atteſtations of ſome real Worth, but, next to the Approbation of GOD and our own Conſciences, one of its moſt valuable Rewards. It will, I doubt not, be found ſo in that World, to which Spirits like yours are tending, and for which thro' Divine Grace You have obtained ſo uncommon a Degree of Ripeneſs. And permit me, Sir, while I write this, to refreſh myſelf with the Hope, that when that Union of Hearts, which has ſo long ſubſiſted between us, ſhall arrive to its full Maturity and Endearment there, it will be Matter of mutual Delight, to think that You have aſſigned me, and that I have in ſome Degree executed a Taſk, which may perhaps, under the Bleſſing of GOD, awaken and improve Religious Sentiments in the Minds of thoſe whom we leave behind us, and of others who may ariſe after us in this vain, tranſitory, inſnaring World.

I AM fully perſuaded, when I conſider the *abundant Entrance* You will have *into the Everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord*, that Heaven has received very few in theſe latter Ages, who have done ſo much to ſerve its Intereſts here below; few, who have laboured in this beſt of Cauſes with equal Aſſiduity and equal Succeſs. And therefore, I cannot but join with all who wiſh well to the *Chriſtian Intereſt* among us, in acknowledging the Goodneſs of Providence to *You* and to *the Church of Chriſt*, in prolonging a Life at once ſo valu-

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able and so tender, to such an advanced Period. With them, Sir, I rejoice, that GOD hath given you to possess in so extraordinary a Degree, not only the Consciousness of intending great Benefit to the World, but the Satisfaction of having effected it, and of seeing such an Harvest already springing up, I hope as an Earnest of a much more copious Increase from thence. With Multitudes more I bless GOD, that YOU are not, in this Evening of so afflicted and yet so laborious a Day, rendered entirely incapable of serving the Publick from the *Press*, and from the *Pulpit*; and that amidst the Pain which your active Spirit feels, when these pleasing Services suffer long Interruptions from Bodily Weakness, it may be so singularly refreshed by reflecting on that Sphere of extensive Usefulness, in which by *your Writings* YOU continually move.

I CONGRATULATE you, dear Sir, that while YOU are in a Multitude of *Families*, and *Schools* of the lower Class, condescending to the humble, yet important Work of forming Infant-Minds to the first Rudiments of Religious Knowledge and devout Impressions by your various *Catechisms* and *Divine Songs*, YOU are also daily reading Lectures of *Logick*, and other useful Branches of *Philosophy*, to studious Youth: And this, not only in our private Methods of Education, but in the most publick and celebrated Seats of Learning; nor merely in *Scotland*, and in our *American* Colonies, (where, from some peculiar Considerations, it might most naturally be expected,) but, thro' the amiable

Candor of ſome excellent Men and accompliſhed Tutors, in our *Engliſh Univerſities* too. I congratulate you, that You are teaching, no doubt Hundreds of *Miniſters*, and Thouſands of *private Chriſtians*, by your *Sermons*, and other *Theological Writings*; ſo happily calculated to diffuſe thro' their Minds that Light of Knowledge, and thro' their Hearts that Fervour of Piety, which GOD has been pleaſed to inkindle in your own. But above all, I congratulate you, that by your *Sacred Poetry*, eſpecially by your *Pſalms*, and your *Hymns*, You are leading the Worſhip, and I truſt alſo animating the Devotion of *Myriads*, in our publick Aſſemblies every Sabbath, and in their Families or Cloſets every Day. This, Sir, at leaſt ſo far as it relates to the *Service of the Sanctuary*, is an unparalleled Favour, by which GOD hath been pleaſed to diſtinguiſh you, I may boldly ſay it, beyond any of his Servants now upon Earth. Well may it be eſteemed *a glorious Equivalent*, and indeed much more than an Equivalent, for all thoſe Views of *Eccleſiaſtical Preferment*, to which ſuch Talents, Learning, Virtues, and Intereſt might have intitled you in an Eſtabliſhment; and I doubt not, but You joyfully accept it as ſuch.

NOR is it eaſy to conceive, in what Circumſtances You could, on any Suppoſition, have been eaſier and happier, than in that *Pious* and truly *Honourable Family*, in which, as I verily believe, in ſpecial Indulgence both to you and to it, Providence has been pleaſed to appoint that You ſhould ſpend ſo conſide-

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rable a Part of your Life. It is my earneſt Prayer, that all the Remainder of it may be ſerene, uſeful, and pleaſant. And as, to my certain Knowledge, *your Compoſitions* have been the ſingular Comfort of many *excellent Chriſtians*, (ſome of them numbered among my deareſt Friends,) on their dying Bed; for I have heard *Stanza's* of them repeated from the Lips of ſeveral, who were doubtleſs in a few Hours to begin *the Song of Moſes and the Lamb*: So I hope and truſt, that when GOD ſhall call you to *that Salvation*, for which your Faith and Patience have ſo long been *waiting*, He will ſhed around you the choiceſt Beams of his Favour, and gladden your Heart with *Conſolations*, like thoſe which You have been the happy Inſtrument of adminiſtring to others.

IN the mean Time, Sir, be aſſured, that I am not a little animated in the *various Labours* to which Providence has called me, by reflecting, that I have *ſuch a Contemporary*, and eſpecially *ſuch a Friend*; whoſe ſingle Preſence would be to me as that of *a Cloud of Witneſſes* here below, to awaken my Alacrity *in the Race that is ſet before me*. And I am perſuaded, that while I ſay this, I ſpeak the Sentiment of many of my Brethren, even of various Denominations: A Conſideration, which I hope will do ſomething towards reconciling a Heart ſo generous as yours, to the Delay of that *exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, which is now ſo nearly approaching. Yes, my honoured Friend, You will, I hope,

chearfully

chearfully endure a little longer Continuance in Life amidſt all its Infirmities; from an Aſſurance, that while GOD is pleaſed to maintain the Exerciſe of your Reaſon, it is hardly poſſible that You ſhould *live in vain*, to the World, or yourſelf. Every Day, and every Trial, is brightening your Crown, and rendering you ſtill more *meet for an Inheritance among the Saints in Light*. Every Word that You drop from the *Pulpit*, has now, ſurely, its peculiar Weight: The Eyes of many are on their *aſcending Prophet*, eagerly intent that they may catch, if not *his Mantle*, at leaſt *ſome Divine Sentence* from his Lips, which may long guide their Ways, and warm their Hearts. This Solicitude your Friends bring into thoſe happy Moments, in which they are favoured with *your Converſe in private*: And when You are retired from them, *your Prayers*, I doubt not, largely contribute towards guarding your Country, watering the Church, and bleſſing the World. Long may they continue to anſwer theſe great Ends! And permit me, Sir, to conclude with expreſſing my chearful Confidence, that in thoſe beſt Moments You are often particularly mindful of one, who ſo highly eſteems, ſo greatly needs, and ſo warmly returns that Remembrance, as,

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Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your moſt Affectionate Brother,

And Obliged Humble Servant,

Northampton,
Dec. 13. 1744.

P. DODDRIDGE.

PREFACE.

THE ſeveral Hints given in the *Dedication*, and the *Firſt Chapter* of this Treatiſe, which contains a particular *Plan of the Deſign*, render it unneceſſary to introduce it with a long Preface. Some of my Readers may perhaps remember, that ſeveral Years ago I promiſed this Work to the Publick, in the *Preface* to the *Second Edition* of my *Sermons on the Power and Grace of Chriſt*, &c. My much honoured Friend DR. WATTS had laid *the Scheme*, eſpecially of the *former Part*: But as thoſe Indiſpoſitions, with which (to the unſpeakable Grief of the Churches,) GOD has been pleaſed to exerciſe him, had forbid his Hopes of being able to add *this* to his many *Labours of Love* to immortal Souls, he was pleaſed in a very affectionate and importunate Manner to urge me to undertake it. And I bleſs GOD with my whole Heart, not only that He hath carried me thro' *this delightful Taſk*, (for ſuch indeed I have found it,) but alſo that He hath ſpared that worthy and amiable Perſon to ſee it accompliſhed, and given him Strength and Spirit to review ſo conſiderable a Part of it. His Approbation, expreſſed in ſtronger Terms than Modeſty will permit me to repeat, encourages me to hope, that it is executed in ſuch a Manner, as may, by the Divine Bleſſing, render it of ſome general Service. And I the rather expect it will be ſo, as it now comes Abroad into the World, not only with

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my own Prayers and *his*, but also with those of *many other Pious Friends*, which I have been particularly careful to engage for its Success.

INTO whatever Hands this Work may come, I must desire, that before any pass their Judgment upon it, they would please to read it through; that they may discern the Connection between one Part of it and another. Which I the rather request, because I have long observed, that *Christians of different Parties* have been eagerly laying Hold on *particular Parts* of the *System of Divine Truths*, and have been contending about them, as if *each* had been *all*; or as if the Separation of the Members from each other, and from the Head, were the Preservation of the Body, instead of its Destruction. They have been zealous to espouse the Defence, and to maintain the Honour and Usefulness of *each apart*; whereas their Honour, as well as Usefulness, seems to be to lie much in *their Connection*: And Suspicions have often arisen betwixt the respective Defenders of each, which have appeared as unreasonable and absurd, as if all the Preparations for securing one Part of a Ship in a Storm were to be censured as a Contrivance to sink the Rest. I pray GOD, to give to *all His Ministers*, and *People*, more and more of *the Spirit of Wisdom*, and *of Love*, and *of a sound Mind*; and to remove far from us those mutual *Jealousies* and *Animosities*, which hinder our acting with *that Unanimity*, which is necessary, in order to the successful carrying on *our common Warfare* against the *Enemies of Christianity*. There is no Doubt, these Enemies will never fail to make their own Advantage of *our multiplied Divisions*, and severe Contests with each other: But they must necessarily lose both their Ground and their Influence, in Proportion to the Degree, in which the Energy of

Christian

Christian Principles is felt, to unite and transform the Hearts of those by whom they are professed.

I TAKE this Opportunity of adding, that as *this Treatise* may be looked upon as the Sequel of my *Sermons on Regeneration*, tho' in something of a different Method; I have taken Care, (in Compliance with the Request of many of my Friends,) that *those Sermons* may be shortly published in the same Form and Size with this Book. I have been solicitous to make them both as cheap as possible, that I may fall in with the charitable Designs of those, who may purpose to give them away. But if any of my Readers desire to have *this Treatise* in a larger Character and fairer Form, they may command an *Octavo Edition* of it, as soon as such a Number is bespoke, as will render it safe for my Printer to undertake it.

I HAVE studied the greatest *Plainness of Speech*, that the lowest of my Readers may, if possible, be able to understand every Word; and I hope, Persons of a more elegant Taste and refined Education will pardon what appeared to me so necessary a Piece of Charity. Such a Care in *Practical Writers* seems one important Instance of that *honouring all Men*, which our amiable and condescending Religion teaches us: And I have been particularly obliged to *my worthy Patron*, for what he hath done to shorten some of the Sentences, and to put my Meaning into plainer and more familiar Words. Yet I dare say, the World will not suspect it of having contracted any Impropriety or Inelegance of Language, by passing thro' the Hands of DR. WATTS.

I CONCLUDE with desiring my Friends to forgive the necessary Interruption which this Work has given to the *Third Volume* of my *Family Exposition*,

ſiter, which I am now ſending to the Preſs as faſt as I can, and hope to publiſh in leſs than a Year. To this Volume I have referred ſeveral *additional Notes*, and the *Indexes*, which are neceſſary to render the former Volumes compleat; having determined to add nothing to the *Second Edition*, which ſhould depreciate the former. I do not think it neceſſary to trouble my Friends with a new Subſcription; taking it for granted, that few, who were pleaſed with the other Part of the Work, will fail of Perfecting the Sett on the *Hiſtorical Books* of the *New Teſtament*. When my Expoſition on the *Epiſtolary Part* may be compleated, GOD only knows. I will proceed in it as faſt as the other Duties of my Station will permit; and I earneſtly beg, that if my Readers find Edification and Advantage by any of my Writings, they would in Return offer a Prayer for me, that GOD may carry me on in that moſt important Labour of my Pen under the remarkable Tokens of His Guidance and Bleſſing.

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THE POSTSCRIPT.

IF there be any of my Readers who imagine or suspect, that there are too many *Express Forms of Prayer* represented here, I desire they would consider but these Two Things:

1. That there is no Place in *Scripture*, where *Express Forms of Prayer* are reproved or discouraged. The Scripture has given us abundant Examples of them in the *Psalms* of *David*, which may properly be used upon the like Occasions; and there is a direct Encouragement in Hosea xiv. 2. *Take with you Words, and turn to the Lord, and say unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously, &c.*

2. That the *Forms of Prayer* in this Book are nothing more than *serious Recollections* of the chief Subjects in the foregoing *Chapters*, tho' they are addressed directly to the great GOD himself. Now this is but the same Direction, several of our *Divines* have given us with respect to our Secret Devotions; *that we would meditate on GOD with GOD*; i. e. that we would form our *Meditations* in the Way of an *Address* to GOD himself, that our Hearts may

may be better guarded from Wanderings, and kept in a more ſolemn and devout Frame, while we are meditating on Divine Things in a practical and experimental Way; and that we may not be ſo eaſily diverted in our retired Solemnities from this Duty.

I hope this will anſwer all the reaſonable *Objections*, that can be conceived or imagined againſt any *Expreſs Forms of Prayer*, which are found in this little Treatiſe.

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THE RISE *and* PROGRESS OF RELIGION *in the* SOUL.

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Work, with some general Account of its Design.

That true Religion is very rare, appears from comparing the Nature of it with the Lives and Characters of Men around us. §. 1, 2. *The Want of it, Matter of just Lamentation.* §. 3. *To remedy this Evil, the Design of the ensuing Treatise:* §. 4. *To which, therefore, the Author earnestly bespeaks the Attention of the Reader, as his own Heart is deeply interested in it.* §. 5, 6. *A General Plan of the Work:* §. 7,— 12. *By which it appears, that the Fifteen first Chapters relate chiefly to the Rise of Religion, and the remaining Chapters to its Progress. The Chapter concludes with a Prayer for the Success of the Work.*

§. 1. WHEN we look round about us with an attentive Eye, and consider the Characters and Pursuits of Men, we plainly see, that tho', in the original Constitution of their Natures, *they only*, of all the Creatures that dwell on the Face of the Earth, be *capable of Religion*, yet many of them shamefully *neglect*

it. And whatever different Notions People may entertain of what they call *Religion*, all must agree in owning that it is *very far from being an universal Thing.*

§. 2. RELIGION, in its most general View, is such a Sense of God on the Soul, and such a Conviction of our Obligations to him, and of our Dependance upon him, as shall engage us to make it our great Care, to conduct ourselves in a Manner which we have reason to believe will be pleasing to Him. Now when we have given this plain Account of *Religion*, it is by no Means necessary, that we should search among the Savages of the *African* or *American* Nations, to find Instances of those who are *Strangers to it.* When we view the Conduct of the Generality of People *at Home*, in a *Christian* and *Protestant Nation*, in a Nation whose Obligations to God have been singular, almost beyond those of any other People under Heaven, will any one presume to say, that *Religion* has an *universal Reign* among us? Will any one suppose, that it prevails *in every Life*, and much less that it reigns *in every Heart?* Alas! the avowed Infidelity, the Profanation of the Name and Day of GOD, the Drunkenness, the Lewdness, the Injustice, the Falshood, the Pride, the Prodigality, the base Selfishness, the stupid Insensibility of the Spiritual and Eternal Interests of themselves and others, which so generally prevail among us, loudly proclaim the contrary. So that one would imagine upon this View, that Thousands and Ten Thousands thought the *Neglect*, and even the *Contempt of Religion*, were a Glory, rather than a Reproach. And where is the Neighbourhood, where is the Society, where is the happy Family, consisting of any considerable Number? in which, on a more exact Examination, we find reason to say, *Religion* fills even this little Circle. There is, perhaps, a Freedom from any gross and scandalous Immoralities, an external Decency of Behaviour, an Attendance on the outward Forms of Worship in Publick, and here and there in the Family; yet amidst all this, there is nothing which looks like the genuine Actings of the Spiritual and Divine Life. There is no Appearance of Love to GOD, no Reverence for his Presence, no Desire of his Favour as the highest Good: There is no cordial Belief of the *Gospel of Salvation*, nor eager Solicitude to escape the

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Condemnation which we have incurred by Sin; no hearty Concern to secure that *Eternal Life*, which *Christ* has purchased and secured for his People, and which he freely promises to all who will receive him. Alas! whatever the Love of *a Friend*, or even of *a Parent*, can do; whatever Inclination there may be, to *hope all Things*, and *believe all Things* the most favourable; Evidence to the contrary will force itself upon the Mind, and extort the unwilling Conclusion; that, whatever else may be amiable in that dear Friend, in that favourite Child, "*Religion* dwells not in its Breast."

§. 3. To a Heart that firmly believes *the Gospel*, and views Persons and Things in the Light of Eternity, *this* is one of the *most mournful Considerations* in the World. And indeed to such a one, all the other Calamities and Evils of Human Nature appear Trifles, when compared with *this*; the Absence of *real Religion*, and that Contrariety to it which reigns in so many Thousands of Mankind. Let *this* be cured, and all the other Evils will easily be borne; nay, Good will be extracted out of them: But if *this* continue, it *bringeth forth Fruit unto Death* (a); and in consequence of it, Multitudes, who share the Entertainments of an indulgent Providence with us, and are at least allied to us by the Bond of the same common Nature, must in a few Years be swept away into *utter Destruction*, and be plunged beyond Redemption into *everlasting Burnings*.

§. 4. I DOUBT not, but there are *many*, under those various Forms of Religious Profession, which have so unhappily divided us in this Nation, who are not only *lamenting this in Public*, if their Office in Life calls them to an Opportunity of doing it; but are likewise *mourning* before GOD *in Secret*, under a Sense of this sad State of Things; and who can appeal to him that *searches all Hearts*, as to the Sincerity of their Desires to revive the languishing Cause of vital *Christianity* and substantial Piety. And, among the rest, the *Author of this Treatise* may assuredly say, It is *this* which animates him to the present Attempt, in the midst of so many other Cares and Labours. For this, he is willing to lay aside many of those curious Amusements in Science, which might suit his

(a) Rom. vii. 5.

his own private Taste, and perhaps open a Way to Rep
tation in the Learned World. For this, he is willing
wave the laboured Ornaments of Speech, that he m
if possible, descend to the Capacity of the lowest Part
Mankind. For this, he would endeavour to convince
Judgment, and to reach the Heart of every Reade
And, in a Word, for this, without any Dread of
Name of an *Enthusiast*, whoever may at random thr
it out upon the Occasion, he would, as it were, *r*
with you into your Closet, from Day to Day; and, w
all Plainness and Freedom, as well as Seriousness, wo
discourse to you of the great Things which he has le
from the *Christian Revelation*, and on which he assure
knows your everlasting Happiness to depend: Tha
you hitherto have lived without *Religion*, you may
now awakened to the Consideration of it, and may
instructed in its Nature and Importance; or that if y
are already, thro' Divine Grace, experimentally
quainted with it, you may be assisted to make a gre
Progress.

§. 5. But he earnestly intreats this Favour of you, th
as it is plainly *a serious Business* we are entering upon, y
would be pleased to give him *a serious* and an *attent*
Hearing. He intreats, that these Addresses, and th
Meditations, may be perused at Leisure, and be thou
over in Retirement; and that you would do him
yourself the Justice, to believe the Representations wh
are here made, and the Warnings which are here giv
to proceed from Sincerity and Love; from an He
which would not designedly give one Moment's unne
sary Pain to the meanest Creature on the Face of
Earth, and much less to any Human Mind. If he
importunate, it is because he at least imagines, that th
is just Reason for it; and fears, lest amidst the Mul
tudes, who are undone by the utter Neglect of Religi
and among those who are greatly damaged for Want
a more resolute and constant Attendance to it, this m
be the Case of some into whose Hands this Tre
may fall.

§. 6. He is *a Barbarian*, and deserves not to be calle
Man, who can look on the Sorrows of his Fellow-C
tures without *drawing out his Soul* unto them, and

ing, at least, that it were *in the Power of his Hand* to help them. Surely Earth would be an Heaven to that Man, who could go about from Place to Place scattering Happiness wherefoever he came, tho' it were only *the Body* that he were capable of relieving, and tho' he could impart nothing better than the Happiness of a mortal Life. But the Happiness rises, in Proportion to the Nature and Degree of the Good which he imparts. *Happy* are we ready to say, were those honoured *Servants of Christ*, who, in the early Days of his Church, were the benevolent and sympathizing Instruments of conveying *miraculous Healing* to those whose Cases seemed desperate; who poured in upon *the Blind* and *the Deaf* the Pleasures of Light and Sound, and called up *the Dead* to the Powers of Action and Enjoyment. But this is an Honour and Happiness, which it is not fit for GOD commonly to bestow on mortal Men. Yet there have been in every Age, and blessed be his Name, there still are those, whom he has condescended to make his Instruments in conveying *nobler* and *more lasting Blessings* than these to their Fellow-Creatures. Death hath long since veiled the Eyes, and stopped the Ears of those, who were the Subjects of *miraculous Healing*, and recovered its Empire over those who were once recalled from the Grave. But the Souls who are prevailed upon to receive the Gospel, *live for ever*. GOD has owned the Labours of his faithful *Ministers* in every Age, to produce these blessed Effects; and some of them *being dead, yet speak* (b) with Power and Success in this important Cause. Wonder not then, if, living and dying, I be ambitious of this Honour; and if *my Mouth be* freely *opened*, where I can truly say, *My Heart is enlarged* (c).

§. 7. In forming my *general Plan* I have been solicitous, that this little Treatise might, if possible, be useful to all its Readers, and contain something suitable to each. I will therefore take the *Man*, and the *Christian*, in a great *Variety of Circumstances*. I will first suppose myself addressing to one of the vast Number of *thoughtless Creatures*, who have hitherto been utterly unconcerned about Religion; and will try what can be done, by all Plainness and Earnestness of Address, to *awaken him* from this fatal

(b) Heb. xi. 4. (c) 2 Cor. vi. 11.

Lethargy, to *a Care*, (*Chap.* 2.) an affectionate and an *immediate Care* about it. (*Chap.* 3.) I will labour to fix a deep and awful *Conviction of Guilt* upon his Conſcience, (*Chap.* 4.) and to ſtrip him of his vain *Excuſes* and his flattering Hopes. (*Chap.* 5.) I will read to him, Oh! that I could fix on his Heart, *that Sentence*, that dreadful Sentence, which a Righteous and an Almighty GOD hath denounced againſt him as a Sinner; (*Chap.* 6.) and endeavour to ſhew him, in how *helpleſs a State* he lies under this Condemnation, as to any Capacity he has of delivering himſelf. (*Chap.* 7.) But I do not mean to leave any in ſo terrible a Situation: I will joyfully proclaim *the glad Tidings of Pardon and Salvation by Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, which is all the Support and Confidence of my own Soul: (*Chap.* 8.) And then I will give ſome general View of *the Way*, by which *this Salvation* is to be obtained; (*Chap.* 9.) *urging* the Sinner *to accept of it*, as affectionately as I can; (*Chap.* 10.) tho' nothing can be ſufficiently pathetick, where, as in this Matter, the Life of an immortal Soul is in queſtion.

§. 8. Too probable it is, that *ſome* will, after all this, remain *inſenſible*; and therefore, that their ſad Caſe may not incumber the following Articles, I ſhall here *take a ſolemn Leave* of them: (*Chap.* 11.) And then ſhall turn and *addreſs myſelf*, as compaſſionately as I can, to a moſt contrary Character: I mean, to *a Soul overwhelmed* with a Senſe of the Greatneſs of its Sins, and trembling under the Burthen, as if there were *no more Hope* for him in GOD. (*Chap.* 12.) And that nothing may be omitted, which may give ſolid Peace to the troubled Spirit, I ſhall endeavour to *guide its Enquiries* as to the *Evidences* of ſincere *Repentance* and *Faith*; (*Chap.* 13.) which will be farther illuſtrated by a more particular View of the *ſeveral Branches* of the *Chriſtian Temper*, ſuch as may ſerve at once to aſſiſt the Reader in judging *what he is*, and to ſhew him *what he ſhould labour to be*. (*Chap.* 14.) This will naturally lead to a View of *the Need* we have of the *Influences of the Bleſſed Spirit*, to aſſiſt us in the important and difficult Work of the true *Chriſtian*; and of *the Encouragement* we have to *hope* for theſe *Divine Aſſiſtances*. (*Chap.* 15.) In an humble

umble Dependance on which, I shall then enter on the onsideration of *several Cases* which often occur in the *hristian* Life, in which *particular Addresses* to the Conience may be requisite and useful.

§. 9. As some peculiar Difficulties and Discouragements attend the *first Entrance* on a Religious Course, it ill here be our first Care *to animate the young Convert* gainst them. *(Chap.* 16.*)* And, that it may be done ore effectually, I shall urge *a solemn Dedication* of himlf to GOD; *(Chap.* 17.*)* to be confirmed by entring into the full Communion of the Church by *an Approach to the sacred Table. (Chap.* 18.*)* That these ngagements may be more happily fulfilled, we shall ndeavour to draw *a more particular Plan* of that deout, regular, and accurate *Course*, which ought daily be attended to: *(Chap.* 19.*)* And because the Idea ill probably rise so much *higher*, than what is *the geneal Practice*, even of Good Men, we shall endeavour to erfuade the Reader to *make the Attempt*, hard as it may em; *(Chap.* 20.*)* and shall caution him against *various Temptations*, which might otherwise *draw him aside* Negligence and Sin. *(Chap.* 21.*)*

§. 10. HAPPY will it be for the Reader, if these Exortations and Cautions be attended to with becoming egard; but as it is, alas, too probable, that notwithanding all, the Infirmities of Nature will sometimes revail, we shall consider the Case of *Deadness* and *Langor in Religion*, which often steals upon us by insensible egrees; *(Chap.* 22.*)* from whence there is too easy a assage to that terrible one of *a Return into known and deliberate Sin. (Chap.* 23.*)* And as the one or the other f these tends, in a proportionable Degree, to *provoke* e Blessed GOD *to hide his Face*, and his injured *Spirit to withdraw*, that melancholy Condition will be taken into particular Survey. *(Chap.* 24.*)* I shall then take Notice lso of the Case of *great and heavy Afflictions* in Life; *Chap.* 25.*)* a Discipline which the best of Men have ason to expect, especially when they *backslide* from OD, and yield to their Spiritual Enemies.

§. 11. INSTANCES of this Kind will, I fear, be too equent; yet, I trust, there will be many others, whose *ath, like the dawning Light*, will *shine more and more*

until

until the perfect Day (d). And therefore we shall endeavour, in the best Manner we can, to assist the *Christian* in *passing a true Judgment* on the *Growth of Grace* in his Heart, (*Chap.* 26.) as we had done before in judging of its Sincerity. And as nothing conduces more to the Advance of Grace, than the lively Exercise of *Love* to GOD, and a *holy Joy* in him, we shall here remind the real *Christian* of *those Mercies*, which tend to excite *that Love* and *Joy*; (*Chap.* 27.) and, in the Views of them, to *animate him to* those vigorous Efforts of *Usefulness in Life*, which so well become his Character, and will have so happy an Efficacy on brightning his Crown. (*Chap.* 28.) Supposing him to act accordingly, we shall then labour to illustrate and assist *the Delight*, with which he may *look forward* to the awful Solemnities of *Death* and *Judgment*: (*Chap.* 29.) And shall close the Scene by accompanying him, as it were, to the near Confines of that *dark Valley*, thro' which he is to pass to Glory; giving him such *Directions*, as may seem most subservient to his honouring GOD, and adorning Religion, by his dying Behaviour. (*Chap.* 30.) Not am I without a pleasing Hope, that, thro' the Divine Blessing and Grace, I may be in some Instances so successful as to leave those *triumphing* in the Views of Death and Judgment, and glorifying GOD by a truly *Christian* Life and Death, whom I found *trembling* in the Apprehensions of future Misery; or, perhaps, in a much more dangerous and miserable Circumstance than that; I mean entirely forgetting the Prospect, and sunk into the most stupid *Insensibility* of those Things, for an Attendance to which the Human Mind was formed, and in Comparison of which all the Pursuits of this transitory Life are *emptier than Wind*, and *lighter than a Feather*.

§. 12. SUCH a Variety of Heads must, to be sure, be handled but *briefly*, as we intend to bring them within the Bulk of a moderate Volume. I shall not, therefore, discuss them, as a *Preacher* might properly do in *Sermons*, in which the Truths of Religion are professedly to be explained and taught, defended and improved, in a wide Variety, and long Detail of Propositions, Arguments, Objections, Replies, and Inferences, marshalled

(d) Prov. iv. 18.

d number'd under their distinct Generals. I shall here eak in a looser and freer Manner, as *a Friend* to a riend; just as I would do, if I were to be in Person lmitted to a private Audience, by one whom I tenderly wed, and whose Circumstance and Character I knew to e like that, which the *Title* of one *Chapter* or another f this Treatise describes. And when I have discoursed ith him a little while, which will seldom be so long *Half an Hour*; I shall, as it were, step aside, and ave him to *meditate* on what he has heard, or endeavour assist him in such fervent *Addresses* to GOD, as it ay be proper to mingle with those *Meditations*. In the ean time, I will here take the Liberty to *pray*, over y Reader, and my Work; and to commend it solemnly the Divine Blessing, in Token of my deep Conviction f an entire Dependance upon it. And I am well perswaded, that Sentiments like these are common, in the eneral, to every *faithful Minister*, to every *real Christian*.

A Prayer *for the* Success *of this Work, in promoting* the Rise *and* Progress *of* Religion.

"OH Thou great Eternal Original, and Author, of our Being and Happiness! I adore Thee, who hast *made Man* a Creature *capable of Religion*, and hast bestowed this Dignity and Felicity upon our Nature, that it may be taught to say, *Where is GOD our Maker* (e)? I lament that *Degeneracy* spread over the whole Human Race, which has *turned our Glory into Shame* (f), and has render'd *the Forgetfulness of GOD* (unnatural as it is,) so *common*, and so *universal* a Disease. *Holy Father*, we know it is Thy Presence, and Thy Teaching alone, that can reclaim thy wandring Children; can impress *a Sense of Divine Things* on the Heart, and render that Sense lasting and effectual. From Thee proceed all good Purposes and Desires; and *this Desire* above all, of diffusing Wisdom, Piety, and Happiness in this World, which (tho' sunk in such deep Apostacy,) Thine infinite Mercy has not utterly forsaken.

"THOU

(e) Job xxxv. 10. (f) Hos. iv. 7.

"THOU knowest, O LORD, *the Hearts of the Children of Men* (g); and an upright Soul, in the midst of all the Censures and Suspicions it may meet with, rejoices in Thine intimate Knowledge of its most secret Sentiments and Principles of Action. Thou knowest *the Sincerity* and *Fervency*, with which Thine unworthy Servant desires to spread the Knowledge of Thy Name, and the Savour of Thy Gospel, among all to whom this Work may reach. Thou knowest that hadst Thou given him *an Abundance of the World*, it would have been, in his Esteem, the noblest Pleasure *that Abundance* could have afforded, to have been *Thine Almoner*, in distributing Thy Bounties to the Indigent and Necessitous, and so causing the sorrowful Heart to *rejoice in Thy Goodness*, dispensed through his Hands. Thou knowest, that hadst Thou given him, either by ordinary or extraordinary Methods, *the Gifts of Healing*, it would have been his daily Delight, to relieve the Pains, the Maladies, and the Infirmities of *Mens Bodies*; to have seen the *languishing Countenance*, brightened by returning Health and Chearfulness; and much more, to have beheld the roving *distracted Mind*, reduced to Calmness and Serenity, in the Exercise of its rational Faculties. Yet *happier*, far happier will he think himself, in the *humble Circumstances*, in which Thy Providence has placed him, if Thou vouchsafe to *honour* these *feeble Endeavours*, as the Means of relieving and enriching *Mens Minds*; of recovering them from the *Madness* of a *sinful State*, and bringing back Thy reasonable Creatures to the Knowledge, the Service and the Enjoyment of their GOD; or of improving those, who are already reduced.

"O MAY it have *that blessed Influence* on the Person whosoever he be, that is now reading these Lines, and on all who may read or hear them! *Let not the LORD be angry*, if I presume to ask, That however weak and contemptible *this Work* may seem in the Eyes of the Children of this World, and however imperfect it really be, as well as *the Author of it* unworthy, it may nevertheless *live before Thee*; and

(g) 2 Chron. vi. 30.

thro' a Divine Power, be mighty to produce *the Rise and Progress of Religion* in the Minds of Multitudes, in distant Places, and in Generations yet to come. Impute it not, O GOD, as a culpable Ambition, if I desire, that whatever becomes of *my Name*, about which I would not lose one Thought before Thee, *that Work*, to which I am now applying myself in thy Strength, may be compleated, and propagated far Abroad; that it may reach to those that are yet unborn, and teach them *Thy Name* and *Thy Praise*, when the Author has long dwelt in the Dust: That so when he shall appear before Thee *in the great Day* of final Account, *his Joy* may be increased, and *his Crown* brightened, by Numbers before unknown to each other, and to him! But if *this Petition* be too great to be granted to one, who pretends no Claim, but *Thy Sovereign Grace*, to hope for being favoured with the least, give him to be in Thine Almighty Hand *the blessed Instrument* of Converting and Saving *one Soul*: And if it be *but one*, and that the weakest and meanest of those who are capable of receiving this Address, it shall be *most thankfully accepted* as a rich Recompence for all the Thought and Labour it may cost; and, tho' it should be amidst a Thousand Disappointments with respect to others, yet it shall be the Subject of immortal *Songs of Praise* to Thee, Oh Blessed GOD, for and by every Soul, whom, thro' the *Blood of Jesus* and the *Grace of Thy Spirit*, Thou hast saved; and everlasting Honours shall be ascribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Spirit*, by the *innumerable Company of Angels*, and by the *General Assembly and Church of the First-born in Heaven*. Amen."

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Careleſs Sinner awakened.

It is too ſuppoſable a Caſe, that this Treatiſe may come into ſuch Hands: §. 1, 2. *Since many, not groſſly vicious, fall under that Character.* §. 3, 4. *A more particular Illuſtration of this Caſe, with an Appeal to the Reader whether it be not his own.* §. 5, 6. *Expoſtulation with ſuch;* §. 7,— 9. *more particularly,* (1.) *From acknowledged Principles, relating to the Nature of GOD, his Univerſal Preſence, Agency, and Perfection.* §. 10,— 12. (2.) *From a View of Perſonal Obligations to him.* §. 13. (3.) *From the Danger of this Neglect, when conſidered in its Aſpect on a Future State.* §. 14. *An Appeal to the Conſcience, as already convinced.* §. 15. *Tranſition to the Subject of the next Chapter.* §. 16. *The Meditation of a thoughtleſs Sinner who begins to be awakened.*

§. 1. SHAMEFULLY and fatally as *Religion* is *neglected* in the World, yet bleſſed be GOD it has *ſome* ſincere Diſciples; *Children of Wiſdom,* whom, even in this fooliſh and degenerate Age, it *juſtifies* (a); who having, by Divine Grace, been brought to the *Knowledge of GOD in Chriſt,* have faithfully devoted *their Hearts* to him, and by a natural Conſequence are devoting *their Lives* to his Service. Could I believe this Treatiſe would fall into no Hands but theirs, my Work would be ſhorter, eaſier, and pleaſanter.

§. 2. BUT among the *Thouſands* that *neglect Religion* it is more than poſſible, that *ſome of my Readers* may be included: And I am ſo deeply affected with their unhappy Caſe, that the Temper of my Heart, as well as the proper Method of my Subject, leads me in the

(a) Matth. xi. 19.

ce to address myself to *such*; to apply to every one them; and therefore to *you*, Oh Reader, whoever you , who may come under the Denomination of *a careless Sinner*.

§. 3. Be not, I beseech you, angry at *the Name*. e Physicians of Souls must *speak plainly*, or they may rther those whom they should cure. I would make harsh and unreasonable Supposition. I would charge u with nothing more, than is absolutely necessary to nvince you, that *you* are the Person to whom I speak. will not, therefore, imagine you, to be a prophane and ndoned *Profligate*. I will not suppose, that you ow yourself to blaspheme GOD, to dishonour his me by customary Swearing, or grossly to violate his bath, or commonly to neglect the Solemnities of his blick Worship: I will not imagine, that you have ured your Neighbours, in their Lives, their Chastity, their Possessions, either by Violence, or by Fraud; or t you have scandalously debased the Rational Nature of an, by that vile Intemperance, which transforms us o the worst Kind of Brutes.

§. 4. In Opposition to all this, I will suppose, that u *believe* the Existence and Providence of GOD, and Truth of *Christianity*, as a Revelation from him; which, if you have any Doubt, I must desire, that u would immediately seek your Satisfaction elsewhere*, y, *Immediately*: Because not to believe it, is in Ef- to disbelieve it; and will make your Ruin equally tain, tho' perhaps it may leave it less aggravated, n if Contempt and Opposition had been added to Sus- ion and Neglect. But supposing you to be *a nominal ristian*, and not a *Deist*, or a *Sceptick*; I will also sup- e your Conduct among Men to be not only blameless, amiable; and that they, who know you most imately, must acknowledge, that you are just and r, humane and courteous, compassionate and liberal:

C Yet,

* In such a Case, I beg Leave to refer the Reader to my *Three ys on the Evidence of Christianity*; the last of the *Ten on the r and Grace of Christ*; in which he may see the hitherto un- n Foundations of my own Faith, in a short, and, I hope, a View.

Yet, with all this, you may *lack that one Thing* (b), which your Eternal Happiness depends.

§. 5. I BESEECH you, Reader, whoever you that you would now look seriously into your own He and ask it this one plain Question, *Am I truly religi* Is the Love of GOD the governing Principle of Life? Do I walk under a Sense of his Presence? I converse with him from Day to Day, in the Exer of Prayer and Praise? And am I, on the whole, ing his Service my Business and my Delight, regar him as my Master and my Father?

§. 6. IT is my present Business, only to address self to the Person, whose Conscience answers in *Negative*. And I would address with equal Plain and equal Freedom, to High and Low, to Rich Poor: To *you*, who (as the Scripture with a dre Propriety expresses it) *live without GOD in the W* (c); and while, in Words and Forms, you *own GO deny him in your Actions* (d), and behave yourselves in main, (a few external Ceremonies only excepted,) ju you would do, if you believed, and were sure, *there no GOD*. Unhappy Creature! your own *Heart demns you* immediately; and how much more that GO *who is greater than your Heart, and knoweth all Th* (e). He is *in Secret* (f), as well as in Publick; Words cannot express the Delight, with which his C dren converse with him *alone*: But *in Secret* you *knowledge him not*; you neither pray to him, nor p him, in your Retirements. Accounts, Correspond Studies may often bring you into *your Closet*; but if thing but Devotion were to be transacted there, it w be to you *quite an unfrequented Place*. And thus go on from Day to Day, in a continual Forgetfulnes GOD; and are as *thoughtless about Religion*, as if had long since demonstrated it to yourself, that it w mere Dream. If, indeed, you are *sick*, you will haps cry to GOD for Health; in any extreme Da you will lift up your Eyes and Voice for Deliver But as for the *Pardon of Sin*, and the other *Blessi the Gospel*, you are not at all inwardly solicitous a

(b) Mark x. 21. (c) Eph. ii. 12. (d) Tit. i. 16.
(e) 1 John iii. 20. (f) Matth. vi. 6.

m; tho' you profeſs to believe, that the Goſpel is Di-
e, and the Bleſſings of it Eternal. All your
oughts, and all your Hours, are divided between the
ineſs and the Amuſements of Life: And if, now and
n, an awful Providence, or a ſerious Sermon or Book,
akens you, it is but a few Days, or it may be a few
urs, and you are the ſame *careleſs Creature* you ever
re before. On the whole, you act, as if you were re-
ved to put it to the Venture, and at your own Ex-
nce to make the Experiment, whether the Conſequences
neglecting Religion be indeed as terrible, as its Mini-
rs and Friends have pretended. Their Remonſtrances
indeed ſometimes force themſelves upon you, as (con-
ering the Age and Country in which you live,) it is
rdly poſſible entirely to avoid them; but you have, it
y be, found out the Art of *Iſaiah*'s People, *Hearing*
hear, and not underſtand; and ſeeing to ſee, and not
rceive: Your Heart is waxed groſs, your Eyes are
own up, and your Ears heavy (g). Under the very
dinances of Worſhip, your Thoughts *are at the Ends*
the Earth (h). Every Amuſement of the Imagina-
n is welcome, if it may but lead away your Mind from
inſipid, and ſo diſagreeable a Subject, as *Religion*.
d probably the *very laſt* Time you were in a worſhip-
g Aſſembly, you managed, juſt as you would have
ne, if you had thought GOD knew nothing of your
haviour; or as if you did not think it worth one ſin-
e Care, whether He were pleaſed or diſpleaſed with it.

§. 7. ALAS! Is it then come to this, with all your *Be-*
f of GOD, and Providence, and Scripture! That
eligion is *not worth a Thought!* That it is not worth
Hour's ſerious Conſideration and Reflection, "What
GOD and *Chriſt* are; and what *you yourſelves* are,
and what you muſt hereafter be?" Where then are
l your *Rational Faculties?* How are they employed?
r rather, how are they ſtupified and benumbed?

§. 8. THE *Certainty* and *Importance* of the Things of
hich I ſpeak are *ſo evident*, from the Principles which
ou yourſelves grant, that one might almoſt ſet *a Child*
an Idiot to reaſon upon them. And yet they are neg-
cted by thoſe, who are grown up to Underſtanding,

(g) Iſai. vi. 9, 10. (h) Prov. xvii. 24.

and perhaps ſome of them to ſuch Refinement of Un-
ſtanding, that they would think themſelves greatly
jured, if they were not to be reckoned among the Po
and the more Learned Part of Mankind.

§. 9. But it is not *your Neglect*, Sirs, that can de
the Being or Importance of ſuch Things as theſe.
may indeed *deſtroy you*, but it cannot in the leaſt a
them. Permit me therefore, having been *myſelf* awa
to come to each of you, and ſay, as the Mariner
Jonah, while *aſleep* in the midſt of a much leſs da
ous Storm, *What meaneſt thou, Oh Sleeper? Ariſe,
call upon thy GOD* (i). Do you doubt as to the
ſonableneſs, or Neceſſity, of doing it? *I will de
and anſwer me* (k): Anſwer me to your own Conſci
as one that muſt, 'ere long, render another Kind of
count.

§. 10. You own, that *there is a GOD*: And
you may: For you cannot open your Eyes, but
muſt ſee the *evident Proofs* of his Being, his Pre
and his Agency. You behold him *around you* in
Object. You feel him *within you*, if I may ſo ſp
in every Vein, and in every Nerve. You ſee, and
feel, not only that He has *formed you* with an ex
Wiſdom, which no mortal Man could ever fully
or comprehend; but that He is continually *ne*
wherever you are, and however you are employed,
Day, or by Night; *in Him you live, and move,
have your Being* (l). Common Senſe will tell you,
it is not your own Wiſdom, and Power, and Attent
that cauſes your *Heart* to beat, and your *Blood* to c
late; that draws in, and ſends out that *Breath* of
that precarious *Breath* of a moſt uncertain Life, *tha
in your Noſtrils* (m). Theſe Things are done when
ſleep, as well as in thoſe waking Moments, when
think not of the *Circulation of the Blood*, or of the
ceſſity of *Breathing*, nor ſo much as recollect that
have a *Heart* and *Lungs*. Now what is this, but *the
of GOD*, perpetually ſupporting and actuating
curious Machines that He has made?

§.

(i) Jon. i. 6. (k) Job. xxxviii. 3. (l) Acts xvii.
(m) Iſai. ii. 22.

§. 11. Nor is this *His Care* limited to *you*; but, if you look all around you, far as your Views can reach, you see it extending itself *on every Side*: And Oh how much *farther* than you can trace it! Reflect on the *Light* and *Heat*, which the *Sun* every where dispenses; on the *Air*, which surrounds all our Globe, on the right Temperature of which *the Life* of the whole Human Race depends, and that of all the inferior Creatures which dwell on the Earth. Think of the suitable and plentiful *Provision* made *for Man and Beast*; the Grass, the Grain, the Variety of Fruits, and Herbs, and Flowers; every Thing that nourishes us, every Thing that delights us; and say, whether it do not speak plainly and loudly, that our Almighty Maker is near, and that he is careful of us, and kind to us. And while all these Things proclaim *His Goodness*, do they not also proclaim *His Power*? For what *Power* is any thing comparable to that, which furnishes out these Gifts of Royal Bounty: and which, unwearied and unchanged, produces continually, from Day to Day, and from Age to Age, such astonishing and magnificent Effects over the Face of the whole Earth, and thro' all the Regions of Heaven!

§. 12. It is then evident, that *GOD is present*, present with you at this Moment; even *GOD* your Creator and Preserver, *GOD* the Creator and Preserver of the whole visible and invisible World. And is he not *present* as a most observant and attentive Being? *He that formed the Eye, shall not He see? He that planted the Ear, shall not He hear? He that teaches Man Knowledge*, that gives him his Rational Faculties, and pours in on his opening Mind all the Light it receives by them, *shall not He know* (n)? He who sees all the *Necessities* of his Creatures, so seasonably to provide for them, shall He not see their *Actions* too; and seeing, shall He not *judge* of them? Has He given us a Sense and Discernment of what is good and evil, of what is true and false, of what is fair and deformed in Temper and Conduct; and has He himself no Discernment of these Things? Trifle not with your Conscience, which tells you at once, that He *judges* of it; and approves or condemns, as it is decent or indecent, reasonable or unreasonable; and

(n) Psal. xciv. 9, 10.

that the *Judgment* which He passes, is of infinite Im-
portance to all his Creatures.

§. 13. And now, to apply all this to your own Ca-
let me seriously ask you, Is it a decent and reasona-
Thing, that this great and glorious Benefactor should
neglected by his Rational Creatures? by those, that
capable of attaining to some Knowledge of him,
presenting to him some Homage? Is it decent and re-
sonable, that He should be forgotten and neglected
you? Are *you alone*, of all the Works of his Han
forgotten and neglected *by Him*? Oh Sinner, *though*
as you are, you cannot dare to say that, or even to th
it. You need not go back to the helpless Days of
Infancy and *Childhood*, to convince you of the contr
You need not, in order to this, to recollect the rema
able *Deliverances*, which, perhaps, were wrought
for you *many Years ago*. The Repose of the *last N*
the Refreshment and Comfort you have received
Day; yea, the Mercies you are receiving *this very*
ment, bear witness to him; and yet *you regard him*
Ungrateful Creature that you are! Could you
treated any Human Benefactor thus? Could you
borne to *neglect* a kind Parent, or any generous Fri
that had but for a few Months acted the Part of a Pa
to you? To have taken no Notice of him, while
his Presence? To have returned him no Thanks, to
had no Contrivances to make some little Acknowle
ment for all his Goodness? *Human Nature*, bad as it
is not fallen so low. Nay, the *Brutal Nature* is not
low as this. Surely every Domestick Animal around y
must *shame such Ingratitude*. If you do but for a
Days take a little kind Notice of *a Dog*, and feed
with the Refuse of your Table, he will wait upon y
and love to be near you; he will be eager to follow
from Place to Place, and when, after a little Abse
you return Home, will try, by a thousand fond tr
ported Motions, to tell you how much he rejoices to
you again. Nay, *Brutes*, far less sagacious and app
hensive, have some Sense of our Kindness, and exp
it after their Way: As the blessed GOD condescen
observe, in this very View in which I mention it,
dull *Ox knows his Owner, and the* stupid *Ass his*

r's *Crib* (o): What lamentable Degeneracy, therefore, it, that *you do not know*, that *you*, who have been numer'd among *GOD's* profeſſing *People*, *do not*, and will ot *conſider* your numberleſs Obligations to him?

§. 14. SURELY, if you have any Ingenuity of Temer, you muſt be aſhamed and grieved in the Review: ut if you have not, give me leave farther to expoſtulate ith you on this Head, by ſetting it in ſomething of a ifferent Light. Can you think *yourſelves ſafe*, while ou are acting a Part like this? Do you not in your onſcience *believe*, there will be *a future Judgment*? o you not *believe*, there is an *inviſible* and *eternal* orld? As profeſſed *Chriſtians*, we all *believe it*; for is no controverted Point, but diſplay'd in *Scripture* ith ſo clear an Evidence, that, ſubtile and ingenious as len are in Error, they have not yet found out a Way evade it. And, *believing this*, do you not ſee, that hile you are thus wandering from GOD, *Deſtruction nd Miſery are in your Ways* (p)? Will this Indolence, d Negligence of Temper, be *any Security* to you? Will guard you from *Death*? Will it excuſe you from *udgment*? You might much more reaſonably expect, at *ſhutting your Eyes* would be *a Defence* againſt the age of a devouring *Lion*; or that *looking another Way* ould *ſecure your Body* from being pierced by a *Bullet* or *Sword*. When GOD ſpeaks of the extravagant *Folly* ſome *thoughtleſs Creatures*, who would hearken to no dmonition *now*, he adds, in a very awful Manner: *the latter Day they ſhall conſider it perfectly* (q). And not this applicable to *you*? Muſt you not, ſooner or ter, be brought *to think of theſe Things*, whether you ill or no? And, in the mean time, do you not certainly know, that *timely* and *ſerious Reflection* upon em is, thro' Divine Grace, the only Way to prevent ur Ruin?

§. 15. YES, Sinner, I need not multiply Words on Subject like this. *Your Conſcience* is already *inwardly vinced*, tho' *your Pride* may be unwilling to own it. d, to prove it, let me aſk you *one Queſtion* more: ould you, upon any Terms and Conſiderations whatcome to a Reſolution, abſolutely to *diſmiſs* all farther

(o) Iſai. i. 3. (p) Rom. iii. 16. (q) Jer. xxiii. 20.

ther *Thought of Religion*, and all *Care about it*, from t
Day and Hour, and to abide by the Conſequences
that Neglect? I believe, hardly any Man living wo
be *bold enough* to determine upon this. I believe, n
of my Readers would be ready to *tremble* at the Tho
of it.

§. 16. But if it be *neceſſary* to take theſe Things i
Conſideration *at all*, it is *neceſſary* to do it *quickly*;
Life itſelf is not ſo very long, nor ſo certain, that a w
Man ſhould *riſque much* upon its Continuance. An
hope to *convince you*, when I have another Hear
that it is *neceſſary* to do it *immediately*; and that nex
the Madneſs of reſolving, *You will not think of Relig
at all*, is that of ſaying, *You will think of it hereaf*
In the mean Time, *pauſe* on the Hints which have b
already given, and they will prepare you to rec
what is to be added on that Head.

The Meditation *of a* Thoughtleſs Sinner *who begins to be awakened.*

"AWAKE, Oh my forgetful Soul, *awake* fr
"theſe *wandering Dreams*. Turn thee fr
"this *Chace of Vanity*, and for a little while be p
"ſuaded, by all theſe Conſiderations, to *look forwar*
"and to *look upward*, at leaſt for a few Mome
"Sufficient are the *Hours*, and *Days*, given to the *l*
"*hours* and *Amuſements* of Life. Grudge not a ſh
"Allotment of *Minutes*, to view *thyſelf*, and thine ow
"*more immediate Concerns*; to reflect, *who*, and *wh*
"*thou art*; how it comes to paſs, *that thou art ho*
"and *what thou muſt quickly be!*

"It is *indeed*, as thou haſt now ſeen it repreſen
"Thou art *the Creature of* GOD; formed and f
"niſhed by Him, and *lodged in a Body*, which He p
"vided, and which He ſupports; *a Body*, in which H
"intended thee only *a tranſitory Abode*. Oh, th
"how ſoon *this Tabernacle* muſt *be diſſolved* (r), a
"thou muſt *return to* GOD (s). And ſhall Hi
"One, Infinite, Eternal, Ever-bleſſed, and Ever-gl
"ous Being, ſhall He be *leaſt of all regarded* by tho

"W

(r) 2 Cor. v. 1. (s) Eccl. xii. 7.

Wilt thou live and die with this Character, *saying*, by every Action of every Day, *unto GOD, Depart from me, for I desire not the Knowledge of Thy Ways* (t)? The Morning, the Day, the Evening, the Night, every Period of Time, has *its Excuses* for *this Neglect*. But, Oh my Soul, what will *these Excuses* appear, when examined by His penetrating Eye! They may *delude me*; but they cannot *impose upon Him*.

'Oh Thou injured, neglected, provoked Benefactor! When *I think*, but for a Moment or two, of *all Thy Greatness*, and of *all Thy Goodness*, I am astonished at *this Insensibility*, which hath prevailed in mine Heart, and even still prevails. I *blush, and am confounded, to lift up my Face before Thee* (u). On the most transient Review, I see, that *I have played the Fool*, that *I have erred exceedingly* (x). And yet this stupid Heart of mine would make *its having neglected Thee so long*, a Reason for *going on to neglect Thee*. I own, it might justly be expected, that, with regard to Thee, *every one* of Thy Rational Creatures should be *all Duty* and *Love*: That each Heart should be full of a Sense of Thy Presence; and that a Care to please Thee should swallow up every other Care. Yet Thou *hast not been in all my Thoughts* (y); and *Religion*, the End and Glory of my Nature, has been *so strangely over-looked*, that I have hardly ever seriously asked my own Heart, *what it is*.—I know, if Matters rest here, *I perish*. And yet, I feel in my perverse Nature, *a secret Indisposition* to pursue these Thoughts; *a Proneness*, if not entirely to dismiss them, yet *to lay them aside for the present*. My Mind is perplexed and divided: but I am sure, Thou, who madest me, *knowest what is best for me*. I beseech Thee, that Thou wilt, *for Thy Name's sake, lead me and guide me* (z). Let me not *delay*, till it is *for ever too late*. *Pluck me, as a Brand, out of the Burning* (a). Oh *break this fatal Enchantment*, that holds down my Affection to *Objects*, which my Judgment comparatively despises! And let me, at length, come into so happy a State of Mind, that I may not

be

(t) Job. xxi. 14. (u) Ezr. ix. 6. (x) 1 Sam. xxvi. 21.
(y) Psal. x. 4. (z) Psal. xxxi. 3. (a) Amos iv. 11.

" be *afraid* to think of Thee, and of myſelf; and
" not be *tempted* to wiſh, that Thou *hadſt not made*
" or that Thou *couldſt for ever forget me*; that it
" not be *my beſt Hope*, to *periſh like the Brutes*.

" I *v* what I ſhall farther read here, be agreeable
" *Truth* and *Reaſon*; if it be calculated to promot
" *Happineſs*, and is to be regarded as an Intimation
" *Thy Will* and *Pleaſure* to me; Oh GOD,
" me *hear* and *obey!* Let *the Words of Thy Serv*
" when pleading Thy Cauſe, *be like Goads* to
" into my Mind; and let me rather *feel*, and
" than *dye!* Let them be *as Nails faſtened in a*
" *Place* (b): That, whatever *Myſteries* as yet unkno
" or whatever *Difficulties* there be in *Religion*, if
" *neceſſary*, I may not *finally neglect it*; and that
" be *expedient* to attend *immediately* to it, I may
" longer *delay that Attendance!* And, Oh let
" Grace *teach me the Leſſon*, I am *ſo ſlow to le*
" and conquer *that ſtrong Oppoſition*, which I feel in
" Heart, againſt the very Thought of it! Hear
" *broken Cries*, for the Sake of *Thy Son*, who has
" and *ſaved* many a Creature *as unmanageable as I*,
" can *out of Stones raiſe up Children to Abraham*
" Amen."

(b) Eccl. xii. 11. (c) Mat. iii. 9.

CHA

CHAP. III.

The Awakened Sinner urged to immediate Conſideration, and cautioned againſt Delay.

Sinners, when awakened, inclinable to diſmiſs Convictions for the preſent. §. 1. *An immediate Regard to Religion urged,* § 2. (1.) *From the Excellency and Pleaſure of the Thing itſelf.* §. 3. (2.) *From the Uncertainty of that future Time on which Sinners preſume, compared with the ſad Conſequences of being cut off in Sin.* §. 4. (3.) *From the Immutability of GOD's preſent Demands.* §. 5. (4.) *From the Tendency which Delay has, to make a Compliance with theſe Demands more difficult than it is at preſent.* §. 6. (5.) *From the Danger of GOD's withdrawing his Spirit, compared with the dreadful Caſe of a Sinner given up by it:* §. 7. *Which probably is now the Caſe of many.* §. 8. *Since therefore, on the whole, whatever the Event be, Delays muſt prove Matter of Lamentation,* §. 9. *The Chapter concludes with an Exhortation againſt yielding to them:* §. 10. *And a Prayer againſt Temptations of that Kind.*

1. I HOPE my laſt Addreſs ſo far awakened the Convictions of my Reader, as to bring him to Purpoſe, "That ſome Time or other he would attend to Religious Conſiderations." But give me leave ask earneſtly and punctually, "When that ſhall be?" *Go thy Way for this Time, and at a more convenient Seaſon I will ſend for thee,* was the Language, and the Sin, of unhappy *Felix* (a), when he *trembled* under the Reaſonings and Expoſtulations of the *Apoſtle*. The Tempter

(a) Acts xxiv. 25.

Tempter presumed not to urge, That he should give *all Thoughts* of Repentance and Reformation; but only that, considering the present Hurry of his Affairs, (no Doubt they were many,) he should *defer it* to a more Day. The Artifice succeeded, and *Felix* was undone.

§. 2. WILL *you*, Reader, dismiss me thus? I for your own sake, and out of tender Compassion to your perishing immortal Soul, I would not willingly take up with such a Dismission and Excuse. No, not tho' you should *a Time*; tho' you should determine on *the next Year*, *Month*, or *Week*, or *Day*. I would turn upon you with all the Eagerness and Tenderness of friendly Importunity, and intreat you to bring the Matter to an Issue *even now*. For if you say, "I will think on this "Things *to-morrow*," I shall have *little Hope*; and I conclude, That all that I have hitherto urged, and that you have read, hath been offered and viewed *in vain*.

§. 3. WHEN I invite you to the *Care* and *Practice* of *Religion*, it may seem strange, that it should be necessary for me, affectionately to plead the Case with you, in order to your *immediate Regard* and *Compliance*. What I am inviting you to, is so noble and excellent in itself, so well worthy the Dignity of our Rational Nature, so suitable to it, so manly, and so wise, that one would imagine, you should *take Fire*, as it were, at the Hearing of it; yea, that so delightful a View should presently possess your whole Soul with a Kind of Indignation against yourself, that you pursued it *no sooner*. "May I lift up mine Eyes, and my Soul, to GOD! "May I devote myself to Him? May I *even now* "commence a Friendship with Him? *A Friendship* "which shall last for ever, the Security, the Delight, "the Glory of this immortal Nature of mine?" And shall I draw back, and say, "Nevertheless let me not "commence this Friendship *too soon*: Let me live "least a few Weeks, or a few Days longer, without "*GOD in the World?*" Surely it would be much more reasonable to turn inward, and say, "Oh my "Soul, on what vile *Husks* hast thou been feeding, "while thine *Heavenly Father* has been forsaken, and "injured? Shall I desire *to multiply the Days* of my

"Pover

Poverty, my Scandal, and my Misery?" On this nciple, ſurely, *an immediate Return to GOD* ſhould all Reaſon be choſen, rather than to *play the Fool any* ger, and to go on *a little more* to diſpleaſe GOD, thereby to *ſtarve* and to *wound* your own Soul; n tho' your *Continuance in Life* were ever ſo *certain*, your *Capacity to return* to GOD and your Duty r ſo entirely *in your own Power*, now, and in every ure Moment, thro' Scores of Years yet to come.

§. 4. BUT *who*, or *what are You*, that you ſhould your Account for *Years*, or for *Months* to come? *at is your Life?* Is it not *even as a Vapour, that earth for a little Time*, and then *vaniſheth away* (b)? d what is your Security, or what is *your peculiar rrant*, that you ſhould thus *depend* upon the Cer- nty of *its Continuance?* and that ſo abſolutely, as venture, as it were, to *pawn your Soul* upon it? Why, u will perhaps ſay, "I am *young*, and in all my Bloom and Vigour: I ſee *Hundreds* about me, who are more than *double my Age*; and not a few *of them*, who ſeem to think it *too ſoon* to attend to Religion yet."— u view *the Living*, and you talk thus. But I be- h you, think of *the Dead*. Return, in your Thoughts, thoſe *Graves*, in which you have left ſome of your *ng Companions*, and *your Friends*. You ſaw them *a ile ago* gay and active; warm with Life, and Hopes, Schemes. And ſome *of them* would have thought friend ſtrangely importunate, that ſhould have *inter- ted them* in their Buſineſs, and their Pleaſures, with olemn Lecture of *Death* and *Eternity*. Yet they were n *on the very Borders* of both. You have *ſince* ſeen *ir Corpſes*, or at leaſt *their Coffins*; and probably car- d about with you the Badges of *Mourning*, which received at their Funerals. Thoſe *once vigorous*, perhaps *beautiful Bodies* of theirs, *now* lie moulder- *in the Duſt*; as ſenſeleſs, and helpleſs, as the moſt *repid Pieces* of Human Nature, which *Fourſcore Years* brought down to it. And, what is infinitely more e regarded, *their Souls*, whether prepared for this t Change, or thoughtleſs of it, have *made their Ap- ance* before GOD, and are, at this Moment, *fixed*

(b) Jam. iv. 14.

either *in Heaven*, or *in Hell*. Now let me ſeriouſly aſk you, Would it be *miraculous*, or would it be *ſtrange* if ſuch an Event ſhould *befal you?* How are you ſure that ſome *fatal Diſeaſe* ſhall not *this Day* begin to work in your Veins? How are you ſure, that you ſhall ever be *capable* of reading or thinking *any more*, if you do not attend to what you *now* read, and purſue the Thought which is *now* offering itſelf to your Mind? This *ſudden Alteration* may at leaſt *poſſibly happen*; and if it does it will be to you *a terrible one* indeed. To be thus *ſurprized* into the Preſence of a forgotten GOD; to be *torn away*, at once, from *a World*, to which your whole Heart and Soul has been rivetted; *a World*, which has engroſſed all your Thoughts and Cares, all your Deſires and Purſuits; and be *fixed in a State*, which you could never be ſo far perſuaded to think of, as to ſpend ſo much as *one Hour* in ſerious Preparation for it: How muſt you even *ſhudder* at the Apprehenſion of it, and with what *Horror* muſt it fill you? It ſeems *Matter of Wonder*, that, in ſuch Circumſtances, you are not *almoſt diſtracted* with the Thoughts of the *Uncertainty of Life*, and are not even *ready to die* for *Fear of Death*. To *trifle* with GOD *any longer*, after ſo ſolemn an Admonition as this, would be a Circumſtance of *additional Provocation*, which, after all the reſt, might be *fatal*: Nor is there any Thing you can expect in ſuch a Caſe, but that He ſhould *cut you off immediately*, and teach *other Thoughtleſs Creatures*, by your Ruin, what a hazardous Experiment they make, when they act as you are acting.

§. 5. AND will you, after all, run *this deſperate Riſque?* For what imaginable Purpoſe can you do it? Do you think, *the Buſineſs of Religion* will become *more neceſſary*, or *more eaſy*, by your Delay? You know that *it will not*. You know, that whatever the Bleſſings GOD *demands now*, he will alſo demand *Twenty* or *Thirty Years hence*, if you ſhould live to ſee the Time. GOD hath *fixed the Method*, in which he will pardon and accept Sinners, in His *Goſpel*. And will He ever *alter that Method?* Or if He will not, can *Men* alter it? You like not to think of *repenting*, and *humbling yourſelf* before GOD, to receive *Righteouſneſs* and Life from his *free Grace in Chriſt*; and you above all diſlike

e Thought, of *returning* to GOD in the Ways of *Holy bedience*. But will He ever *dispense* with any of these, nd publish *a new Gospel*, with Promises of Life and lvation to *impenitent*, *unbelieving Sinners*, if they will t *call themselves Christians*, and submit to a few *exrnal Rites*? How long, do you think, you might ait *for such a Change* in the Constitution of Things? ou know, *Death* will come upon you; and you cant but know, in your own Conscience, that a general *issolution* will come upon *the World*, long before GOD n thus *deny himself*, and contradict all his Perfections, nd all his Declarations.

§. 6. Or if *his Demands* continue *the same*, as they surely will, do you think, any Thing, which is *now isagreeable* to you in them, will be *less disagreeable reafter*, than it is at present? Shall you *love Sin less*, hen it is become *more habitual* to you, and when Conience is yet more enfeebled and debauched? If you re *running with the Footmen* and *fainting*, shall you e able *to contend with the Horsemen* (c)? Surely you annot imagine it. You would not say, in any *Distemr* which threatned your Life, "I will stay till I grow "*a little worse*, and *then* I will apply to *a Physician*: "I will let my Disease get *a little more Rooting* in my "Vitals, and *then* I will try what can be done to re"move it." No, it is only *where the Life of the Soul* concerned, that Men think thus wildly: The Life and ealth of *the Body* appear too precious, to be thus trifled way.

§. 7. If after such desperate Experiments you are *ever recovered*, it must be by an Operation of *Divine Grace* n your Soul, yet *more powerful* and *more wonderful*, in roportion to the increasing *Inveteracy* of your *Spiritual Maladies*. And can you expect, that *the Holy Spirit* hould be *more ready to assist you*, in Consequence of your aving so shamefully *trifled with him*, and affronted him? le is *now*, in some Measure, *moving on your Heart*: If ou feel any *secret Relentings* in it upon what you read, is *a Sign* you are not yet utterly forsaken: But who an tell, whether these are not *the last Touches* he will ver give, to a Heart *so long hardened* against him?

(c) Jer. xii. 5.

Who can tell, but GOD may this Day *ſwear in* [illegible] *Wrath, that you ſhall not enter into his Reſt* (d)? I [illegible] been telling you, that you may *immediately die*. Y[ou] own it *poſſible*, you may. And can you think of [a] Thing *more terrible*? Yes, Sinner, I will tell you [a] one Thing *more dreadful, than immediate Death and* [im]*mediate Damnation*. The Bleſſed GOD may ſay, "[I] " for that wretched Creature, who has *ſo long tri*[ed] " with me, and provoked me, let him *ſtill live*: [Let] " him *live* in the Midſt of Proſperity and Plenty: [Let] " him *live* under the pureſt, and moſt powerful *Or*[di]*nances of the Goſpel* too, that he may *abuſe them*, [and] " aggravate his Condemnation, and die *under ſeven*[fold] " *Guilt*, and *a ſevenfold Curſe*. I will not give [him] " *the Grace* to think of his Ways for one ſerious [Mo]" ment more; but he ſhall go on from bad to wor[ſe]" *filling up the Meaſure of his Iniquities*, till *Death* [and] " *Deſtruction* ſeize him in an unexpected Hour, [and] " *Wrath come upon him to the uttermoſt* (e)."

§. 8. You think this *an uncommon Caſe*; but, I fe[ar] it is *much otherwiſe*. I fear, there are few Congre[ga]tions, where *the Word of GOD* has been faithfu[lly] preached, and where it has been *long deſpiſed*, eſpeci[ally] by thoſe whom it had *once awakened*, in which the E[ye] of GOD does not ſee *a Number* of ſuch wretched Sou[ls] tho' it is impoſſible for us to pronounce upon the C[ase] who they are.

§. 9. I PRETEND not to ſay, how He will *deal* [with] *you*, Oh Reader; whether He will *immediately cut you* [off] or *ſeal you up* under *final Hardneſs and Impenitency* [of] *Heart*; or whether *His Grace* may, at length, *awa*[ken] you, to *conſider your Ways*, and to *return to Him*, [or] when *your Heart* is grown *yet more obdurate* than it [is] at preſent: For to his Almighty Grace *nothing is hard*, not even to transform *a Rock of Marble* into *a Man* or *a Saint*. But this I will confidently ſay, That if you *delay any longer*, the Time will come, when you will *bitterly repent* of that Delay; and either *lament it* be[fore] GOD, in the Anguiſh of your Heart *here*, or *curſe your own Folly* and Madneſs *in Hell*; yea, when you will *wiſh*, that, dreadful as Hell is, you had rather [have]

(d) Heb. iii. 18. (e) 1 Theſſ. ii. 16.

to it *sooner*, than have lived in the Midst of so many *abused Mercies*, to render the Degree of *your Punishment* more insupportable, and your Sense of it more exquisitely tormenting.

§. 10. I DO therefore earnestly exhort you, *in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and by *the Worth*, and, if I may so speak, by *the Blood* of *your immortal and perishing Soul*, that you *delay not* a Day, or an Hour longer. Far from *giving Sleep to your Eyes, or Slumber to your Eye-lids* (f), in the continued Neglect of this important Concern, *take with you* even now *Words, and turn unto the* LORD (g); and before you quit the Place where you now are, *fall upon your Knees* in his Sacred Presence, and *pour out your Heart* in such Language, at least to some such Purpose, as this.

PRAYER *for one, who is tempted to* delay *applying to* Religion, *tho' under some Convictions of its Importance.*

OH Thou Righteous and Holy *Sovereign* of Heaven and Earth! Thou *GOD, in whose Hand my Breath is, and whose are all my Ways* (h)! I confess, I have been far from *glorifying Thee*, or conducting myself according to the Intimations, or the Declarations of *Thy Will*. I have therefore Reason to adore *Thy Forbearance* and *Goodness*, that Thou hast not long since stopped my Breath, and *cut me off from the Land of the Living*. I adore *Thy Patience*, that I have not *Months* and *Years ago* been an Inhabitant of *Hell*, where Ten Thousand *delaying Sinners* are now lamenting *their Folly*, and will be lamenting it *for ever*. But, Oh GOD, how possible is it, that *this trifling Heart of mine* may, at length, betray me into *the same Ruin*; and then, alas, into *a Ruin* aggravated by all this Patience and Forbearance of Thine! I am convinced, that, sooner or later, *Religion* must be *my serious Care*, or *I am undone*. And yet, my foolish Heart *draws back from the Yoke*: Yet I stretch myself upon *the Bed of Sloth*, and cry out for *a little more Sleep, a little more Slumber, a*

(f) Prov. vi. 4. (g) Hos. xiv. 2. (h) Dan. v. 23.

" *little more folding of the Hands to ſleep* (i). Th
" does my corrupt Heart plead for *its own Indul*
" againſt the Convictions of my better Judgment. *W*
" *ſhall I ſay?* Oh LORD, *ſave me from my*
" Save me from the Artifices and Deceitfulneſs of S
" Save me from the Treachery of this perverſe and
" generate Nature of mine, and *fix upon my Mind* w
" I have now been reading!

" OH LORD, I am not *now* inſtructed *in Tru*
" which were *before* quite unknown. *Often* hav
" been *warned* of the *Uncertainty of Life*, and of
" *greater Uncertainty* of the *Day of Salvation*: A
" have formed ſome *light Purpoſes*, and have begu
" take a few *irreſolute Steps* in my Way towards a
" turn unto Thee. But, alas, I have been only, a
" were, *fluttering about Religion*, and have never
" *upon it*. All my *Reſolutions* have been *ſcattered*,
" *Smoke*, or diſperſed, like *a cloudy Vapour* before
" *Wind*. Oh that Thou wouldſt *now* bring theſe Th
" home to my Heart, with *a more powerful Convic*
" than it hath ever yet felt! Oh that Thou wou
" *purſue me with them*, even when *I flee from the*
" if I ſhould ever grow *mad enough* to endeavour
" *eſcape them* any more! May Thy *Spirit* addreſs
" in the Language of *effectual Terror*; and add all
" moſt powerful Methods, which Thou knoweſt to
" neceſſary, *to awaken me from this Lethargy*, wh
" muſt otherwiſe be *mortal!* May the Sound of th
" Things be in mine Ears, *when I go out, and when*
" *come in, when I lie down, and when I riſe up* (k)
" And if *the Repoſe of the Night*, and *the Buſineſs of*
" *Day*, be for a while *interrupted* by the Impreſſion,
" *it ſo*, Oh GOD! if I may but thereby carry on
" *Buſineſs with Thee* to better Purpoſe, and at length
" cure *a Repoſe in Thee*, inſtead of *all that Terror* wh
" I now find, when *I think upon GOD, and am tr*
" *bled* (l).

" OH LORD, *my Fleſh trembleth for Fear of T*
" *and I am afraid of Thy Judgments* (m). I am afra
" leſt even *now*, that I have begun to *think of*

(i) Prov. vi. 10. (k) Deut. vi. 7. (l) Pſal. lxxvii.
(m) Pſal. cxix. 120.

gion, Thou ſhouldſt *cut me off*, in this critical and important Moment, before my Thoughts grow to any Ripeneſs; and *blaſt* in Eternal Death, the *firſt Buddings* and Openings of it in my Mind. But Oh *ſpare me*, I earneſtly intreat Thee; *for Thy Mercy's ſake* ſpare me, *a little longer!* It may be, thro' Thy Grace, *I ſhall return*. It may be, if Thou continueſt *Thy Patience* towards me *a while longer*, there may be *ſome better Fruit* produced by this *Cumberer of the Ground* (n). And may the Remembrance of that *long Forbearance*, which Thou haſt already exerciſed towards me, prevent *my continuing to trifle* with Thee, and with my own Soul! From *this Day*, Oh LORD, from *this Hour*, from *this Moment*, may I be able to date *more laſting Impreſſions* of *Religion*, than have ever yet been made upon my Heart, by all that I have ever read, or all that I have heard!! *Amen.*"

(n) Luk. xiii. 7, 8.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Sinner arraigned and convicted.

Conviction of Guilt neceſſary. §. 1. *A Charge of Rebellion againſt* GOD *advanced:* §. 2. *Where it is ſhewn,* (1.) *That all Men are born under* GOD's *Law.* §. 3. (2.) *That no Man hath perfectly kept it.* §. 4. *An Appeal to the Reader's Conſcience on this Head that he hath not.* §. 5. (3.) *That to have broken it is an Evil inexpreſſibly great:* §. 6. *Illuſtrated by a more particular View of the Aggravations of Guilt, ariſing,* [1.] *From Knowledge.* §. 7. [2.] *From Divine Favours received.* §. 8. [3.] *From Convictions of Conſcience overborne.* §. 9. [4.] *From the Strivings of* GOD's *Spirit reſiſted.* §. 10. [5.] *From Vows and Reſolutions broken.* §. 11. *The Charge ſummed up, and left upon the Sinner's Conſcience.* §. 12. *The Sinner's Confeſſion under a general Conviction of Guilt.*

§. 1. AS I am attempting to lead you to *true Religion*, and not meerly to ſome *ſuperficial Form* of it, I am ſenſible, I can do it no otherwiſe, than in the Way of *deep Humiliation.* And therefore, ſuppoſing you are perſuaded, thro' the Divine Bleſſing on what you have before read, to take it into *Conſideration*, I would now endeavour, in the firſt Place, with all the Seriouſneſs I can, to make you *heartily ſenſible* of your *Guilt* before GOD. For I well know, that unleſs you are *convinced of this*, and affected with the Conviction, all the Proviſions of *Goſpel-Grace* will be *ſlighted*, and your Soul infallibly deſtroy'd, in the Midſt of *the very Means* appointed for its Recovery. I am fully perſuaded that Thouſands live and die in a Courſe of Sin, with-

out

g upon their Hearts *any Sense* that *they are Sinners*; they cannot, for Shame, but *own it in Words*. And fore, let me *deal faithfully* with you, tho' I may to *deal roughly*; for *Complaisance* is not to give to Addresses, in which *the Life of your Soul* is con- ed.

2. PERMIT me therefore, Oh Sinner, to *consider* If at this Time, as *an Advocate for* GOD; as one loyed *in his Name*, to plead against thee, and to ge *thee* with nothing less, than being *a Rebel* and *a* tor, against the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven and h. However thou mayest be *dignified* or distinguished ng Men; if the *noblest Blood* ran in thy Veins; if thy were *among Princes*, and thine Arm were *the Terror e Mighty in the Land of the Living* (a); it would be ssary, thou shouldst be told, and told plainly, *Thou broken the Law* of the King of Kings, and by *the ch of it* art become *obnoxious* to his righteous Con- nation.

3. YOUR Conscience tells you, that you were *born* natural *Subject* of GOD; *born* under the indispensa- Obligations of *his Law*: For it is most apparent, the Constitution of *your Rational Nature*, which es you *capable* of *receiving Law* from GOD, binds to *obey it*. And it is equally evident and certain, you *have not* exactly *obeyed this Law*; nay, that *have violated it* in many aggravated Instances.

4. WILL you dare to *deny this*? Will you dare *sert your Innocence*? Remember, it must be *a com- Innocence*: Yes, and *a perfect Righteousness* too: can stand you *in no stead*, further than to prove, tho' *a condemned Sinner*, you are not *quite so cri- l* as some others, and will not have *quite so hot a e* in Hell, as they. And when this is considered, you plead *Not Guilty* to the Charge? Search the rds of *your own Conscience*; for GOD *searcheth*: Ask it seriously, "Have you *never* in your Lives ned against GOD?" *Solomon* declared, that in his *there was not a just Man upon Earth, who did and sinned not* (b): And the Apostle *Paul*, that *all sinned, and come short of the Glory of* GOD (c): that

(a) Ezek. xxxii. 27. (b) Eccles. vii. 20. (c) Rom. iii. 23.

that *both Jews and Gentiles*, (which, you know, com-
hended the whole Human Race,) *were all under Sin*
And can you pretend any imaginable Reason, to be
the World is grown *so much better* since their Days,
any should now plead *their own Case* as *an Excep-*
Or will you, however, presume to arise, in the Fa
the Omniscient Majesty of Heaven, and say, *I am*
Man?

§. 5. SUPPOSING, as before, you have been free
those *gross Acts of Immorality*, which are so perni-
to Society, that they have generally been *punish*
Human Laws; can you pretend, that you *have no*
smaller Instances, *violated the Rules* of Piety, of
perance, and of Charity? Is there *any one Perso*
has intimately known you, that would not be able
tify, you had said, or done *something amiss?* O
others could not convict you, would not *your own*
do it? Does it not *prove you guilty* of Pride, of Pa
of Sensuality; of an excessive Fondness for the W
and its Enjoyments; of murmuring, or at least of
repining, against GOD, under the Strokes of his
tive Providence; of mispending a great deal of
Time; of abusing the Gifts of GOD's Bounty, to
if not (in some Instances) to pernicious Purpose
mocking him, when you have pretended to engage
Worship, *drawing near to him with your Mouth and*
Lips, while your Heart has been *far from him*
Does not *Conscience condemn you* of some *one Brea*
the Law at least? And by *one Breach of it* you
Sense, a Scriptural Sense, *become guilty of all* (f)
are as incapable of being *justified before GOD* by
Obedience of your own, as if you had committed
Thousand Offences. But, in Reality, there are *Ten Tho*
and *more*, chargeable to your Account. When you
to reflect on *all your Sins of Negligence*, as well
those of *Commission*; on all the Instances, in which
have *failed to do Good, when it was in the Power*
Hand to do it (g); on all the Instances, in which
of Devotion have been *omitted*; especially *in Secret*
on all those Cases, in which you have shewn *a stup*

(d) Rom. iii. 9. (e) Isai. xxix. 13. (f) Jam. ii.
(g) Prov. iii. 27.

rd to the Honour of GOD, and to the Temporal Eternal Happineſs of your Fellow-Creatures: When *these*, I ſay, are reviewed, *the Number* will ſwell be- *all Poſſibility of Account*, and force you to cry out, *Iniquities are more than the Hairs of my Head* (h). y will appear in ſuch a Light before you, that *your Heart* will charge you with *countleſs Multitudes*; how much more then *that* GOD, who *is greater your Heart, and knoweth all Things* (i)!

6. And ſay, Sinner, Is it *a little Thing*, that you preſumed to *ſet light by the Authority* of the GOD Heaven, and to *violate his Law*, if it had been by *Careleſſneſs* and *Inattention*? How much more ous, therefore, is *the Guilt*, when in ſo many In- es you have done it *knowingly*, and *wilfully*? Give Leave ſeriouſly to aſk you, and let me intreat you to your own Soul, *Againſt whom haſt thou magnified lf? Againſt whom haſt thou exalted thy Voice* (k), *ſted up* thy rebellious Hand? On *whoſe Law*, Oh er, haſt thou preſumed to *trample*? and *whoſe ndſhip*, and *whoſe Enmity*, haſt thou thereby dared to *nt*? Is it *a Man like thyſelf*, that thou haſt inſulted? only *a Temporal Monarch*? Only one, *who can thy Body, and then hath no more that he can do* (l)? , Sinner, thou wouldſt not have *dared* to treat *a ral Prince*, as thou haſt treated *the King Eternal, rtal, and Inviſible* (m). No Price could have *hired* to deal by the Majeſty of *an Earthly Sovereign*, as haſt dealt by *that* GOD, before whom the *Cher- n* and *Seraphim* are continually *bowing*. Not one ſing or complaining, diſputing or murmuring *Word* ard among all the *Celeſtial Legions*, when the Inti- ons of *his Will* are publiſhed to them. And *who thou*, Oh wretched Man; *who art thou*, that thou ldſt oppoſe Him? That *thou* ſhouldſt oppoſe and oke *a* GOD of infinite Power and Terror, who but exert one ſingle Act of *his Sovereign Will*, and art in a Moment ſtripped of *every Poſſeſſion*; cut from *every Hope*; deſtroyed and rooted up from *ence*, if that were his Pleaſure; or, what *is incon- ceivably*

(h) Pſal. xl. 12. (i) 1 John iii. 20. (k) 2 Kings xix. 22, Luk. xii. 4. (m) 1 Tim. i. 17.

ceivably worſe, conſigned over to the ſevereſt and
laſting *Agonies?* Yet, *This* is *the* GOD, whom
haſt *offended*; whom thou haſt *affronted to his Face*,
ſuming to violate his expreſs Laws in his very Preſe
This is *the* GOD, before whom thou ſtandeſt as a convi
Criminal; *convicted*, not of *One* or *Two* particular O
ces, but of *Thouſands* and *Ten Thouſands*; of a Courſe
Series of *Rebellions* and *Provocations*, in which thou
perſiſted, more or leſs, ever ſince thou waſt born; and
Particulars of which have been *attended*, with al
every conceivable Circumſtance of *Aggravation*. Re
on *Particulars*; and *deny the Charge*, if you can.

§. 7. If *Knowledge* be an *Aggravation* of Guilt,
Guilt, Oh Sinner, is *greatly aggravated*: For thou
born in *Emmanuel's Land*, and GOD hath *written*
thee the great Things of His Law, yet *thou haſt acc*
them as a ſtrange Thing (n). Thou haſt *known*
Good, and haſt not done it (o); and therefore *to thee*
Omiſſion of it *has been Sin* indeed. *Haſt thou not kno*
Haſt thou not heard (p)? Waſt thou not *early taught*
Will of GOD, in thine Infant Years? Haſt thou
ſince receiv'd *repeated Leſſons*, by which it has been
culcated again and again, *in publick*, and *in private*,
preaching and reading the Word of GOD? Nay,
not *thy Duty* been, in ſome Inſtances, *ſo plain*, that
without any Inſtruction at all *thine own Reaſon*
eaſily have inferred it? And haſt thou not alſo
warned of the Conſequences of *Diſobedience*?
thou not *known the righteous Judgment of* GOD,
they who commit ſuch Things, are worthy of Death
Yet thou haſt, perhaps, *not only done the ſame, but*
taken Pleaſure in thoſe that do them; haſt choſen
for *thy moſt intimate Friends* and *Companions*;
thereby *to ſtrengthen*, by the Force of Example
Converſe, *the Hands of each other* in your Iniquit

§. 8. Nay more, If *Divine Love and Mercy*
Aggravation of the Sins committed againſt it, *thy*
Oh Sinner, are *heinouſly aggravated*. Muſt thou
knowledge it, *Oh fooliſh Creature, and unwiſe*?
thou not been *nouriſhed and brought up by him*

(n) Hoſ. viii. 12. (o) Jam. iv. 17. (p) Iſai. xl.
(q) Rom. i. 32.

ld, and yet *hast rebelled against him* (r)? Did not
D *take you out of the Womb* (s)? Did he not *watch*
r you in your Infant Days, and *guard you* from a Mul-
de of *Dangers*, which the most careful *Parent* or
st could not have observed, or warded off? Has he
given you your *Rational Powers*? and is it not by Him
have been favour'd with every Opportunity of im-
ving them? Has he not every Day *supplied your*
nts, with an unwearied Liberality; and *added*, with
pect to many who will read this, *the Delicacies of*
e, to its necessary Supports? Has he not *heard your*
, when Trouble came upon you (t); and frequently *ap-*
red for your Deliverance, when in the Distresses of
ture you have *called upon him for Help*? Has he not
nd you from Ruin, when it seemed just ready to swal-
you up; and *healed your Diseases*, when it seemed
ll about you, that *the Residue of your Days was cut*
in the Midst (u)? Or if it have not been so, is not
long continued and uninterrupted *Health*, which you
e enjoyed for so many Years, to be acknowledged as
equivalent Obligation? Look round upon *all your*
essions, and say, What one Thing have you in the
rld, which *his Goodness* did not *give you*, and which
ath not thus far *preserved to you*? Add to all this,
kind Notices of his Will which he hath sent you; *the*
er Expostulations which he hath used with you, to
g you to a wiser and a better Temper; and *the Dis-*
ries and *gracious Invitations* of his *Gospel*, which
have heard, and which you *have despised*: And then
whether *your Rebellion* has not been *aggravated* by
vilest *Ingratitude*, and whether *that Aggravation* can
ccounted *small*?

9. Again, If it be any *Aggravation of Sin* to be
mitted *against Conscience*, thy Crimes, Oh Sinner,
e been *so aggravated*. Consult the Records of it;
then *dispute the Fact*, if you can. *There is a Spirit*
Man, and *the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth him*
erstanding (w); and that Understanding *will act*, and
cret Conviction of *being accountable* to its Maker and
erver, *is inseparable* from the Actings of it. It is

Isai. i. 2. (s) Psal. xxii. 9. (t) Job xxvii. 9.
) Psal. ciii. 24. Isai. xxxviii. 10. (w) Job xxxii. 8.

easy to *object* to Human Remonstrances, and to ... Things *false Colourings* before Men: But *the Heart ... condemns*, while *the Tongue excuses*. Have you not ... found it so? Has not *Conscience remonstrated* ... your past Conduct, and have not *these Remonstrances* ... *very painful* too? I have been assured by one of ... doubted Credit, that when he was in the Pursuit ... the gayest Sensualities of Life, and was reckoned ... the happiest of Mankind, he has seen *a Dog* come ... the Room where he was among his merry Compa... and has groaned inwardly, and said, "Oh that I ... "been *that Dog!*" And hast *thou*, Sinner, *felt* no... like this? Has *thy Conscience* been so *stupified*, so ... *with a hot Iron* (x), that it has never *cried out* ... of *the Violences* which have been done it? Has it ... *warned thee* of the *fatal Consequences* of what thou ... done in Opposition to it? *These Warnings* are, in ... fect, *the Voice of* GOD; they are *the Admo...* which he gave thee by *his Vicegerent* in thy Breast. ... when *his Sentence for thy Evil Works* is executed ... thee, in *everlasting Death*, thou shalt *hear that* ... speaking to thee again, in a louder Tone, and a ... Accent than before: And thou shalt be tormented ... *its Upbraidings* thro' *Eternity*, because thou wouldst ... in *Time*, hearken to *its Admonitions*.

§. 10. LET me add further, If it be any *Aggra... tion*, that Sin has been committed *after* GOD *has ... moving by his Spirit* on the Mind, surely *your Sin* ... been attended with *that Aggravation* too. Under *Mosaic Dispensation*, dark and imperfect as it was, ... *Spirit strove with the Jews*; else *Stephen* could not ... charged it upon them, that, thro' all their Genera... *they had alway resisted him* (y). Now surely we may ... more reasonably apprehend, that he *strives with Sin* ... under the *Gospel*. And have you never *experienced* ... Thing of this Kind, even when there has been ... *ternal Circumstance* to awaken you, nor any *pious Tu...* near you? Have you never perceived *some secret ... pulse* upon your Mind, leading you to *think of Re...* urging you to an *immediate Consideration* of it, ... Inviting you to *make Trial* of it, and warning you ...

(x) 1 Tim. iv. 2. (y) Acts vii. 51.

would *lament* this *stupid Neglect?* Oh Sinner, why not *these happy Motions* attended to? Why did you as it were, *spread out all the Sails* of your Soul, *to* that heavenly, that favourable *Breeze?* But you carelessly *neglected it:* You have *overborne* these Influences: How reasonably then might *the Sentence gone forth* in righteous Displeasure, *My Spirit shall ere strive* (z)? And indeed, who can say, that it t *already gone forth?* If you feel *no secret Agita-* of Mind, *no Remorse, no Awakening,* while you *such a Remonstrance as this,* there will be *Room,* Room *to suspect it.*

11. THERE is indeed *one Aggravation more,* which not attend *your Guilt;* I mean, *that* of being com- *against solemn Covenant-Engagements:* A Cir- ance, which has *lain heavy* on the Consciences of who, perhaps, in the main Series of their Lives, served GOD with great Integrity. But let me ou to think, *To what is this owing?* Is it not, you have *never personally made* any *solemn Profession* voting yourself to GOD at all? have *never done hing,* which has appeared to your own Apprehen- *n Action* by which you *made a Covenant with Him;* ou have *heard* so much *of His Covenant,* tho' you been so solemnly and so tenderly *invited into it?* in this View, *how monstrous* must *this Circum-* appear, which at first was mentioned as *some Al-* *tion* of Guilt? Yet I must add, that you are not, ps, altogether *so free from Guilt* on this Head, as may at first imagine. I will not insist on *the Cove-* which *your Parents* made in your Name, when devoted you to GOD *in Baptism;* tho' it is really *ighty Matter,* and by *calling yourself a Christian* ave professed to *own* and *avow* what they then did. would remind you, of what may have been *more al* and *expres.* Has *your Heart* been, even from Youth, *hardened* to so uncommon a Degree, that ave *never cried* to GOD in any Season of Danger Difficulty? And did you *never mingle Vows* with Cries? Did you *never promise,* that if GOD *bear and help you* in that Hour of Extremity, you

(z) Gen. vi. 3.

would *forſake your Sins*, and *ſerve him* as long a
lived? He *heard and helped you*, or you had no
reading theſe Lines; and, *by ſuch Deliverance*, d
it were, *bind down your Vows upon you*; and th
your Guilt in the Violation of them *remains befor*
tho' you are ſtupid enough to forget them. Noth
forgotten, nothing is *overlooked* by him; and th
will come, when *the Record* ſhall be laid *befo*
too.

§. 12. AND now, Oh Sinner, think ſeriouſly
thyſelf, *what Defence* thou wilt make to all this
pare *thine Apology*; call *thy Witneſſes*; make *thi*
peal, from him whom thou haſt thus offended, t
ſuperior Judge, if ſuch there be. Alas, *thoſe A*
are *ſo weak* and *vain*, that one of thy *Fellow*
may eaſily *detect* and *confound them*; as I will en
preſently to ſhew thee. But *thy foreboding Conſci*
ready knows the Iſſue. Thou art *convicted*; co
of the *moſt aggravated Offences*. Thou *haſt not*
thine Heart, but lifted up thyſelf againſt the LO
Heaven (a); and *thy Sentence ſhall come forth fr*
Preſence (b). Thou haſt *violated* his known *Law*
haſt *deſpiſed* and *abuſed* his numberleſs *Mercies*; th
affronted Conſcience, his Vicegerent in thy Soul;
haſt *reſiſted* and *grieved his Spirit*; thou haſt *trifl*
him in all thy pretended Submiſſions; and in one
and that his own, *thou haſt done Evil Things*
couldſt (c). Thouſands are, no doubt, *already*
whoſe Guilt never equalled thine; and 'tis aſto
that GOD *has ſpared thee* to read this Repre
of the Caſe, or to make *any Pauſe* upon it. O
not *ſo precious a Moment*, but enter, as atte
and as humbly as thou canſt, into *thoſe Re*
which ſuit a Caſe ſo lamentable, and ſo ter
thine!

(a) Dan. v. 22, 23. (b) Pſal. xvii. 2. (c) Jer. ii.

CONFESSION *of a Sinner, convinced in general of his Guilt.*

OH GOD! Thou *injured Sovereign*, Thou all-penetrating and almighty *Judge!* What shall I ſay to *this Charge?* Shall I pretend, I am *wronged* in it, and *ſtand on the Defence* in Thy Preſence? I dare *not* do it; for *Thou knowſt my Fooliſhneſs, and the Sins are hid from Thee* (d). My Conſcience tells me, that a *Denial* of my Crimes would only *increaſe them*, and add *new Fuel* to the Fire of thy deſerved Wrath. *If I juſtify myſelf, mine own Mouth will condemn me; if I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe* (e). For *innumerable Evils have compaſſed me about: Mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up: They are*, as I have been told in Thy Name, *more than the Hairs of my Head*; and *therefore my Heart faileth me* (f). I am *more guilty*, than it is poſſible for *another* to declare, or repreſent. *My Heart* ſpeaks more, than *any other* Accuſer. And Thou, *Oh LORD*, art much *greater than my Heart, and knoweſt all Things* (g).

What has *my Life* been, but *a Courſe of Rebellion* againſt Thee? It is not *this*, or *that particular Act* alone, I have to lament. *Nothing* has been *right*, in its Principles, and Views, and Ends. *My whole Soul* has been *diſordered*. All my Thoughts, my Affections, my Deſires, my Purſuits, have been wretchedly *alienated from Thee*. I have acted, as if I had *hated Thee*, who art infinitely the loveliest of all Beings; as if I had been *contriving*, how I might *tempt Thee* to the uttermoſt, and *weary out Thy Patience*, marvellous as it is. *My Actions* have been Evil; *my Words* yet more Evil than they; and, Oh Bleſſed GOD, *my Heart*, how much more corrupt than either! What an inexhauſted *Fountain of Sin* has there been in it? *A Fountain*, which flows on even to this Day, beyond what *Actions*, or *Words* could expreſs.

(d) Pſal. lxix. 5. (e) Job ix. 20. (f) Pſal. xl. 12.
(g) 1 John iii. 20.

" I see *this* to have been *the Case*, with Regard t
" I can *particularly survey*. But oh, how many
" and *Years*, have I *forgotten?* concerning w
" only know this, in the general, that they a
" *like those* I can *remember*; except it be, that
" been growing *worse and worse*, and provoking
" Patience *more and more*, tho' every new Exa
" it was more and more wonderful.

" And how am I *astonished*, that *Thy Forbear*
" still *continued!* It is, *because* Thou art *GOD*,
" *not Man* (h). Had I, *a sinful Worm*, bee
" *injured*, I could not have *endured it*. Had I b
" *Prince*, I had long since *done Justice* on any
" whose Crimes had borne but a distant Resembla
" mine. Had I been *a Parent*, I had long sinc
" *off* the ungrateful *Child*, who had made me
" *Return*, as I have all my Life long been mak
" Thee, Oh Thou *Father of my Spirit!* The Fl
" *natural Affection* would have been *extinguished*
" *his Sight*, and *his very Name*, would have b
" *hateful* to me. Why then, *Oh LORD*, am
" *cast out from Thy Presence* (i)? Why am
" *sealed up* under an irreversible *Sentence of Destr*
" That *I live*, I owe to *Thine Indulgence*. But,
" if there be yet *any Way of Deliverance*, if th
" yet *any Hope* for so guilty a Creature, may
" *opened upon me* by Thy *Gospel*, and Thy *Grace!*
" if any *farther Alarm*, *Humiliation*, and *Terro*
" *necessary* to my Security and Salvation, may I
" *them*, and bear them all! *Wound mine Heart*,
" LORD, so that thou wilt but afterwards *heal*
" and *break it in pieces*, if thou wilt but at length
" descend to *bind it up!*"

(h) Hos. xi. 9. (i) Jer. lii. 3.

CHA

CHAP. V.

The Sinner ſtripped of his vain Pleas.

The Vanity of thoſe Pleas, which Sinners may ſecretly confide in, ſo apparent, that they will be aſhamed at laſt to mention them before GOD. §. 1, 2. *Such as,* (1.) *That they deſcended from pious Parents.* §. 3. (2.) *That they had attended to the ſpeculative Part of Religion.* §. 4. (3.) *That they had entertained ſound Notions.* §. 5. (4.) *That they had expreſſed a zealous Regard to Religion, and attended the outward Forms of Worſhip with thoſe they apprehended the pureſt Churches.* §. 6, 7. (5.) *That they had been free from groſs Immoralities.* §. 8. (6.) *That they did not think the Conſequence of neglecting Religion would have been ſo fatal.* §. 9. (7.) *That they could not do otherwiſe than they did.* §. 10. *Concluſion,* §. 11. *with the Meditation of a convinced Sinner, giving up his vain Pleas before* GOD.

1. MY laſt Diſcourſe left the Sinner in a very alarming, and a very pitiable Circumſtance; a riminal *convicted* at the Bar of GOD, diſarmed of Pretences to perfect Innocence and ſinleſs Obedience, d conſequently obnoxious to the Sentence of a *Holy Law*, ich can make no Allowance for any Tranſgreſſion, not for the leaſt; but pronounces Death, and a rſe, againſt every Act of Diſobedience: How much re then againſt thoſe numberleſs and aggravated Acts of ellion, of which, Oh Sinner, *thy Conſcience* hath demned thee before GOD? I would hope, ſome of Readers will ingenuouſly *fall under the Conviction*, not think of *making any Apology*: For ſure I am, t humbly to *plead Guilty* at the Divine Bar, is the moſt

moſt decent, and, all Things conſidered, the moſt pro
Thing that can be done in ſuch an unhappy Circu
ſtance. Yet I know the *Treachery*, and the *Self-flatt*
of a ſinful and corrupted Heart. I know what *Lo*
it makes, and how, when it is driven from *one Ref*
it flies to *another*, to *fortify* itſelf againſt *full Convict*
and to perſwade, not merely another, but itſelf, "Th
"if it has been *in ſome Inſtances* to blame, it is
"*quite ſo criminal* as was repreſented: That there
"at leaſt *Conſiderations* that plead *in its Favo*
"which, if they *cannot juſtify*, will in ſome De
"*excuſe*." A ſecret *Reſerve of this Kind*, ſometi
perhaps ſcarce formed into a diſtinct Reflection, bre
the Force of *Conviction*, and often prevents *that*
Humiliation before GOD, which is the happieſt Te
of approaching Deliverance. I will therefore exa
into ſome of theſe Particulars; and for that Pur
would ſeriouſly aſk thee, Oh Sinner, What thou ha
offer *in Arreſt of Judgment*? What *Plea* thou c
urge *for thy Self*, why *the Sentence of GOD* ſhould
go forth againſt thee, and why thou ſhouldſt not fall
the Hands of his Juſtice?

§. 2. But this I muſt premiſe, that *the Queſtio*
not, How thou wouldſt *anſwer to me*, a weak *fe*
Worm like thyſelf, who am ſhortly to ſtand with the
ſame Bar: (*The* LORD *grant, that I may find Mo*
of the LORD *in that Day* (a)!) But, what thou
reply to thy Judge? What couldſt thou *plead*, if th
waſt now actually *before his Tribunal*; where, to m
tiply *vain Words*, and to frame *idle Apologies*, would
but to *increaſe* thy Guilt and Provocation? Surely
very Thought of His Preſence muſt ſuperſede a Thou
of thoſe *trifling Excuſes*, which now ſometimes im
on *a Generation that are pure in their own Eyes*,
they *are not waſhed from their Filthineſs* (b); or, w
they are conſcious of their own Impurities, *truſt in W*
that cannot profit (c), and *lean upon broken Reeds* (d).

§. 3. You will not to be ſure, in ſuch a Circumſt
plead, "that you are *deſcended from pious Pare*
That was indeed *your Privilege*; and Woe be to y

(a) 2 Tim. i. 18. (b) Prov. xxx. 12. (c) Jer.
(d) Iſai. xxxvi. 6.

you have *abuſed it*, and *forſook the GOD of your thers* (e). *Iſhmael* was immediately deſcended from *raham, the Friend of GOD*; and *Eſau* was the Son *Iſaac*, who was born according to the Promiſe: Yet know, they were both *cut off from the Bleſſing*, to ich they apprehended they had a Kind of *hereditary im*. You may remember, that *our LORD* does only ſpeak of *one*, who could call *Abraham Father*, o was *tormented in Flames* (f); but expreſsly declares, t *many of the Children of the Kingdom ſhall be ſhut of it*; and when *others come* from the moſt diſtant Parts *ſit down in it*, ſhall be diſtinguiſhed only by louder cents of *Lamentation*, and more furious *Gnaſhing of Teeth* (g).

§. 4. NOR will you *then* preſume to plead, "that you had exerciſed your Thoughts about *the ſpeculative Part of Religion*:" For to what End can this ve, but to *increaſe your Condemnation*? Since you have oken *GOD's Law*, ſince you have contradicted the oſt obvious and apparent Obligations of *Religion*, to ve *enquired into it*, and *argued upon it*, is a Circumnce that proves *your Guilt* more audacious. What? you think *Religion* was merely an Exerciſe of *Men's it*, and the Amuſement of their *Curioſity*? If you gued about it, on the Principles of *common Senſe*, you uſt have judged and proved it to be *a practical Thing*; d if it was ſo, why did not you *practiſe accordingly*? u *knew* the particular Branches of it; and why then d you *not attend* to every one of them? To have caded *an unavoidable Ignorance*, would have been *the ppieſt Plea* that could have remained for you: Nay, *actual*, tho' *faulty Ignorance*, would have been ſome ttle *Allay* of *your Guilt*. But if, by your own Conſſion, you have *known your Maſter's Will, and have t done it*, you bear Witneſs againſt yourſelf, that you ſerve to *be beaten with many Stripes* (h).

§. 5. NOR yet again, will it ſuffice to ſay, "that you have had *right Notions*, both of the *Doctrines*, and the *Precepts* of *Religion*." Your Advantage for *actiſing it* was therefore the greater: But *underſtanding*,

and

(e) 2 Chron. vii. 22. (f) Luke xvi. 24. (g) Matt. viii. 11, 12.
(h) Luke xii. 47.

and *acting right*, can never go for *the same Thing*, in the Judgment of *GOD*, or of *Man*. In *believing there is One GOD*, you have *done well*; but *the Devils also believe, and tremble* (i). In *acknowledging Christ* to be *the Son of GOD*, and *the Holy One*, you have *done well* too; but you know, *the unclean Spirits* made this *very orthodox Confession* (k), and yet they are *reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness unto the Judgment of the great Day* (l). And will you place any secret Confidence *in that*, which might be pleaded *by the Infernal Spirits*, as well as *by you?*

§. 6. But perhaps you may think of pleading "that you have actually *done something in Religion*." Having judged *what Faith* was *the soundest*, and *what Worship the purest*, "You entered yourselves into those "*Societies*, where *such Articles of Faith* were *professed*, "and *such Forms of Worship* were *practised*; and a"mong these you have signalized yourselves, by "*Exactness of your Attendance*, by *the Zeal* with which "you have espoused their Cause, and by the *Earnest*"*ness* with which you have *contended* for such Principles "and Practices."—Oh Sinner, I much fear, that *this Zeal of thine*, about *the Circumstantials of Religion*, will swell *thine Account*, rather than be allowed *in Abatement* of it. He *that searches thine Heart*, knows *from whence* it arose, and *how far* it extended. Perhaps He sees, that it was all *Hypocrisy*, an artful Veil, under which thou wast carrying on *thy mean Designs* for *this World*; while the *Sacred Names* of GOD and *Religion* were *profaned* and *prostituted* in the basest Manner: And if so, thou art *cursed* with *a distinguishing Curse*, for *so daring an Insult*, on the *Divine Omniscience*, as well as *Justice*. Or perhaps *the Earnestness* with which you have been *contending for the Faith* and Worship, *which was once delivered to the Saints* (m), or which 'tis possible you may *rashly* have concluded to be that, might be mere *Pride* and *Bitterness of Spirit*. And all *the Zeal* you have express'd might possibly arise *from a Confidence in your own Judgment*, from *an Inexperience of Contradiction*, or from *a secret Malignity of Spirit*, which

(i) Jam. ii. 19. (k) Luke iv. 34, 41. (l) Jud. ver.
(m) Jud. ver. 3.

ich delighted itſelf in *condemning*, and even in *worry-* *others*; yea, which (if I may be allowed the Ex-ſſion,) fiercely *preyed upon Religion*, as the *Tyger* upon *Lamb*, to turn it into a Nature moſt contrary to its n. And ſhall *this ſcreen you* before the Great Tribu- ? Shall it not rather *awaken the Diſpleaſure*, it is aded to avert?

§. 7. But ſay, that this your *Zeal for Notions and ms* has been *ever ſo well intended*, and, ſo far as it has ne, *ever ſo well conducted* too; what will *that* avail vards *vindicating thee* in ſo many Inſtances of *Negli-ce* and *Diſobedience*, as are recorded againſt thee *in Book of GOD's Remembrance?* Were the Revealed *trines of the Goſpel* to be *earneſtly maintained*, (as ced they ought,) and was the great *Practical Purpoſe* which they were revealed to be *forgot?* Was the very *nt*, and *Anniſe*, and *Cummin to be tithed*, and were *weightier Matters of the Law to be omitted* (n); n that *Love to GOD*, which is its *firſt and great mmand* (o)? Or how wilt thou be able to *vindicate n the juſteſt Sentence* thou haſt *paſſed on others* for ir *Infidelity*, or for their *Diſobedience*, without being *demned out of thine own Mouth* (p)?

§. 8. Will you then plead "your fair *moral Cha-racter*, your *Works of Righteouſneſs* and *of Mercy?*" d your *Obedience* to the Law of GOD been *com-t*, the *Plea* might be *allowed*, as important and d. But I have ſuppoſed and proved above, that *Con-nce teſtifies to the contrary*; and you will not now *e to contradict it*. I add farther, Had *theſe Works ours*, which you now urge, *proceeded* from a ſincere *t to GOD*, and a genuine *Faith in the Lord Jeſus riſt*, you would not have thought of *pleading them*, otherwiſe than as *an Evidence of your Intereſt* in the ſpel-Covenant, and in the Bleſſings of it, procured by *Righteouſneſs* and *Blood* of the *Redeemer*: And *that th*, had it been *ſincere*, would have been *attended* ſuch *deep Humility*, and with ſuch *ſolemn Appre-ſions* of the *Divine Holineſs* and *Glory*, that inſtead of ding *any Works of your own* before GOD, you ld rather have implored *his Pardon*, for the Mixture of *ſinful*

(n) Mat. xxiii. 23. (o) Mat. xxii. 38. (p) Luke xix. 22.

ſinful Imperfection attending the very beſt of them. N
as you are *a Stranger* to this *humbling* and *ſanctif*
Principle, (which, in the whole of this Addreſs, I
it for granted that you are,) it is abſolutely neceſſary
ſhould be plainly and faithfully told, that neither
briety, nor *Honeſty*, nor *Humanity* will *juſtify* you b
the Tribunal of GOD, when he *lays Judgment to*
Line, and Righteouſneſs to the Plummet (q), and exa
all your Actions, and *all your Thoughts*, with the ſtri
Severity. You have not been a *Drunkard*, an *Adulte*
or a *Robber*. So far it is *well*. You ſtand befo
righteous GOD, who will do you ample Juſtice;
therefore *will not condemn you* for *Drunkenneſs*, *A*
tery, or *Robbery*. But you have *forgotten him*,
Parent, and your Benefactor; you have *caſt off Fear*,
reſtrained Prayer before him (r); you have *deſpiſed*
Blood of his Son, and all the immortal *Bleſſings* tha
purchaſed with it. *For this* therefore you are *ju*
and *condemned*. And as for any Thing that has l
like *Virtue* and *Humanity* in your Temper and Co
the Exerciſe of it has in a great Meaſure been *its*
Reward, if there were any Thing more than Form
Artifice in it; and the various *Bounties of Divine*
vidence to you, amidſt all your numberleſs Provoca
have been a thouſand Times more than *an Equiv*
for ſuch *defective* and *imperfect Virtues* as theſe.
remain therefore *chargeable* with the Guilt of *a Th*
Offences, for which you have *no Excuſe*, tho' ther
ſome *other Inſtances* in which you did not groſsly o
And *thoſe good Works*, in which you have been ſo
to truſt, will *no more vindicate you* in his awful Pre
than *a Man's Kindneſs* to his poor *Neighbours* wou
allowed as *a Plea* in *Arreſt of Judgment*, when he
convicted of High Treaſon againſt his *Prince*.

§. 9. BUT you will, perhaps, be ready to ſay, "
" *did not expect* all this: You *did not think* the C
" quences of *neglecting Religion* would have been *ſo ſ*
And why did you *not think it?* Why did you not *ex*
more attentively, and more impartially? Why did
ſuffer *the Pride* and *Folly* of your *vain Heart* to t
with ſuch *ſuperficial Appearances*, and truſt *the ligh*
ſ

(q) Iſai. xxviii. 17. (r) Job xv. 4.

ons of your own *prejudiced Mind* againſt the expreſs laration of *the Word of GOD?* Had you reflected on *Character*, as the Supreme Governor of the World, would have ſeen *the Neceſſity* of ſuch *a Day of Re-ution*, as we are now referring to. Had you regarded *Scripture*, the Divine Authority of which you pro-d to believe, *every Page* might have *taught you* to *it.* "You *did not think of Religion.*" And *of* t were you *thinking*, when you *forgot*, or *neglected* Had you too much Employment *of another Kind?* what Kind, I beſeech you? *What End* could you poſe by any Thing elſe, *of equal Moment?* Nay, all your Engagements, *Conſcience* will tell you, that e have been *Seaſons*, when, *for Want of Thought*, e and Life have been a Burden to you: Yet you ded againſt *Thought* as *an Enemy*, and caſt up (as it) *an Intrenchment of Inconſideration* around you on y Side, as if it had been *to defend you* from the moſt erous *Invaſion*. GOD knew *you were thoughtleſs*; therefore he ſent you *Line upon Line, and Precept Precept* (s), in ſuch plain Language, that it needed Genius or Study to underſtand it. He tried you too *Afflictions*, as well as with *Mercies*, to *awaken you* of your fatal *Lethargy:* And yet, *when awakened*, would *lie down again* upon the *Bed of Sloth*. And , pleaſing as *your Dreams* might be, *you muſt lie down orrow* (t). *Reflection* has at laſt *overtaken you*, and be heard *as a Tormentor*, ſince it might not be heard *Friend*.

10. BUT ſome may perhaps imagine, that *one im-nt Apology* is yet unheard, and that there may be m to ſay, "You were, *by the Neceſſity of your Na-re*, impelled to thoſe Things, which are now *harged upon you* as *Crimes*; whereas *it was not in ur Power* to have avoided them, in the *Circumſtances* which you were placed." If this will *do any Thing*, deed promiſes *to do much*; ſo much, that it will a-nt to *nothing*. If I were diſpoſed to *anſwer you* up-he Folly and Madneſs of *your own Principles*, I t ſay, that *the ſame Conſideration*, which proves it *neceſſary* for you *to offend*, proves alſo that it is *neceſ-*

ſary

(s) Iſai. xxviii. 10. (t) Iſai. l. 11.

ſary for GOD *to puniſh you*; and that indeed, he c*but do it.* And if you ſhould *reply*, He would *punish unjuſtly*, if the Action he puniſhes were *utterly* and *lutely unavoidable*; I really think, you would *right.* But I leave you to judge, *what Sort of a* that muſt be, which would make *all Kind of Puni unjuſt:* For the Argument will on the whole *ſame*, whether with Regard to *Human Puniſhment Divine.* 'Tis *a Scheme* full of Confuſion and H You would not, I am ſure, take it from *a Servant*, had *robbed you*, and then *fired your Houſe:* You never inwardly believe, that *he could not have help* or think, that he had fairly *excuſed himſelf* by *ſuch a* And I am perſuaded, you would be ſo far from pre to *offer it* to GOD *at the great Day*, that you would venture to *turn it into a Prayer* even *now.* Imagine, you ſaw a *Malefactor* dying, with ſuch Words as thes his Mouth: " Oh GOD, it is true, I did indeed *rob* " *murther* my Fellow-Creatures; but Thou knoweſt, " as *my Circumſtances* were ordered, *I could do no* " *wiſe:* My *Will* was *irreſiſtibly determined* by the " tives which Thou didſt ſet before me; and I co " well have *ſhaken the Foundations of the Earth*, or " *ened the Sun* in the Firmament, as have *reſiſted th* " *pulſe* which bore me on." I put it to *your Conſci* whether you would not look *on ſuch a Speech as this* Deteſtation, as one *Enormity* added to another. Y *the Excuſe* would have *any Weight in your Mouth*, would have *equal Weight in his*; or would be *equally plicable* to any the moſt ſhocking Occaſion. But in it is *ſo contrary* to the plaineſt Principles of *common Re* that I can hardly perſuade myſelf, *any one could* ſeri and thoroughly *believe it*; and ſhould imagine my T very ill employed here, if I were to ſet myſelf to *thoſe Sophiſms*, by which the Wantonneſs of *Human* has attempted to varniſh it over.

§. 11. You ſee then, on the whole, *the Vani all your Pleas*, and how eaſily *the moſt plauſible of* might be *ſilenced*, by a *mortal Man*, like yourſelf: much more then by Him, *who ſearches all Hearts*, can, in a Moment, *flaſh in upon the Conſcience* a

pow

rful and irresistible *Conviction?* What then *can you* while you *stand convicted* in the Presence of GOD? t *should you do,* but *hold your Peace* under an *inward* of your *inexcusable Guilt,* and prepare yourselves *ar the Sentence* which *His Law* pronounces against You must *feel the Execution of it,* if the *Gospel* not at length *deliver you*; and you must *feel* some- of *the Terror of it,* before you can be excited to seek *at Gospel* for *Deliverance.*

MEDITATION *of a* Convinced Sinner, *giving up his vain Pleas before* GOD.

DEPLORABLE Condition, to which I am indeed reduced! *I have sinned*; and *what shall say unto Thee, Oh Thou Preserver of Men* (u)? What all I *dare to say?* Fool that I was, to amuse myself ith such *trifling Excuses* as these, and to imagine, ey could have *any Weight* in Thy tremendous Pre- nce; or that I should *be able* so much as *to mention* em there! I cannot *presume* to do it. I am *silent* d *confounded.* My *Hopes,* alas, are *slain*; and *my ul* itself is *ready to die* too; so far as an Immortal oul *can die:* And I am almost ready to say, *Oh that could die entirely!* I am indeed *a Criminal* in the land of Justice, *quite disarmed,* and *stripped of the eapons* in which I trusted. *Dissimulation* can only dd Provocation to Provocation. I will therefore *lainly* and *freely own it.* I have *acted,* as if I *thought* OD *was altogether such a one as myself: But* He ath said, *I will reprove thee*; *I will set* thy Sins *in rder before thine Eyes* (x), and will marshal them *in attle Array.* And Oh, what *a terrible Kind of* ost do they appear? and how do they *surround me* eyond all *Possibility of Escape!* Oh *my Soul,* they ave, as it were, *taken thee Prisoner*; and they are *earing thee away* to the *Divine Tribunal.*

Thou must *appear before it!* Thou must *see* the wful *Eternal Judge,* who *tries the* very *Reins* (y); nd who *needs no other Evidence,* for He has *him-*

(u) Job. vii. 20. (x) Psal. l. 21. (y) Jer. xvii. 10.

" *ſelf been Witneſs* (z) to all thy Rebellion. T
" muſt *ſee Him*, Oh my Soul, *ſitting in Judgment* o
" thee: and when He is *ſtrict to mark Iniquity* (a), h
" wilt thou *anſwer Him for one of a Thouſand* (b)! h
" if thou *canſt not anſwer Him*, in what Language s
" *He ſpeak to thee!* Lord, as Things at preſent ſtand
" can expect *no other Language* than that of Condem
" *tion.* And *what a Condemnation* is it! Let me re
" upon it! Let me *read my Sentence*, before I hear
" finally and irreverſibly *paſſed!* I know, He has r
" *corded it in His Word*; and I know in the gene
" that *the Repreſentation* is made *with a gracious*
" *ſign* I know, that He would *have us alarmed*, t
" we *may not be deſtroyed.* Speak to me therefore, G
" G O D, while Thou *ſpeakeſt not for the laſt T*
" and in Circumſtances when Thou wilt *hear me m*
" Speak *in the Language* of *effectual Terror*, ſo tha
" be not to ſpeak me *into final Deſpair.* And let
" *Word*, however painful in its Operation, be *quick*
" *powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged Sword*
" Let me not vainly *flatter myſelf:* Let me not be
" *wretched Prey* to thoſe who would *prophecy ſm*
" *Things to me* (d), till I am *ſealed up* under W
" and feel *Thy Juſtice* piercing my Soul, and *the P*
" *of Thine Arrows drinking up all my Spirits* (e).

" Before I enter upon *the particular View*, I b
" in the general, that *it is a terrible Thing to fall*
" *the Hands of the living G O D* (f). Oh Thou b
" *G O D*, in one Senſe I am *already fallen into T*
" *Hands.* I am become *obnoxious to Thy Diſplea*
" juſtly obnoxious to it; and whatever *Thy Sentence*
" be, when it *comes forth from Thy Preſence* (g), I
" *condemn myſelf*, and *juſtify Thee.* Thou canſt not
" me *with more Severity*, than *mine Iniquities* ha
" *ſerved:* And how bitter ſoever *that Cup of Tre*
" may be (h), which Thou ſhalt appoint for me, I
" Judgment againſt myſelf, that I deſerve *to wring*
" *the very Dregs of it* (i)."

(z) Jer. xxix. 23. (a) Pſal. cxxx. 3. (b) Job
(c) Heb. iv. 12. (d) Iſai. xxx. 10. (e) Jo
(f) Heb. x. 31. (g) Pſal. xvii. 2. (h) Iſai.
(i) Pſal. lxxv. 8.

CH

CHAP. VI.

The Sinner Sentenced.

e Sinner called upon to hear his Sentence. §. 1, 2. *GOD's Law does now in general pronounce a Curſe:* §. 3. *It pronounces Death,* §. 4. *and being turned into Hell.* §. 5. *The Judgment Day ſhall come.* §. 6. *The Solemnity of that grand Proceſs deſcribed, according to Scriptural Repreſentations of it,* §. 7, 8. *with a particular Illuſtration of the Sentence,* Depart Accurſed, &c. §. 9. *The Execution will certainly and immediately follow.* §. 10. *The Sinner warned to endure it.* §. 11. *The Reflection of a Sinner ſtruck with the Terror of this Sentence.*

1. *HEAR,* Oh Sinner, *and I will ſpeak* (a) yet once more, as *in the Name* of *GOD,* of *OD,* thine Almighty *Judge*; who, if thou doſt not end to *his Servants,* will 'ere long *ſpeak unto thee* in a re *immediate* Manner, with an Energy and Terror ich thou ſhalt not be able to reſiſt.

§. 2. THOU haſt been *convicted,* as in his Preſence. y *Pleas* have been *over-ruled*; or rather, they have n *ſilenced.* It appears *before GOD,* it appears *to thine n Conſcience,* that thou haſt nothing more to offer *in reſt of Judgment*; therefore *hear thy Sentence,* and mon up, if thou canſt, all the Powers of thy Soul *bear the Execution* of it. *It is* indeed *a very ſmall ing to be judged of Man's Judgment*; but *he that judgeth thee, is the Lord* (b). Hear therefore, and mble, while I tell thee, *how he will ſpeak to thee*; or her, while I ſhew thee, from expreſs *Scripture,* how doth *even now ſpeak,* and what is *the authentick* and *rded Sentence of his Word*; even of *His Word,* who hath

(a) Job xlii. 4. (b) 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

hath ſaid, *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away; but one Tittle of my Word ſhall ever paſs away* (c).

§. 3. THE *Law of* GOD ſpeaks, not *to thee* alone Oh Sinner, nor *to thee* by any *particular Addreſs*; but in a moſt *univerſal Language*, it ſpeaks *to all Tranſgreſſors*, and levels its Terrors againſt *all Offences*, great ſmall, without any Exception. And this is its Language *Curſed is every one, that continueth not in all Things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them* (d). This is its Voice to the *whole World*; and this it ſpeaks to *thee*. Its awful Contents are *thy perſonal Concern*, O Reader; and thy Conſcience knows it. Far from *continuing in all Things that are written therein to do them* thou canſt not but be ſenſible, that *innumerable Evils have compaſſed thee about* (e). It is then manifeſt, *Thou art the Man*, whom it condemns; thou art even now *curſed with a Curſe*, as GOD emphatically ſpeaks (f); with *the Curſe* of the Moſt High GOD: Yea, *all the Curſes* which are *written in the Book of the Law*, are pointed *againſt thee* (g). GOD may righteouſly *execute* any of them *upon thee* in a Moment; and tho' thou *at preſent* feeleſt none of them, yet, if infinite Mercy doth not prevent, it is but *a little while*, and they will *come into thy Bowels like Water*, till thou art burſt aſunder with them and ſhall penetrate *like Oil into thy Bones* (h).

§. 4. THUS ſaith the Lord, *The Soul that ſinneth, ſhall die* (i). But thou *haſt ſinned*, and therefore thou art under *a Sentence of Death*. And, Oh unhappy Creature, *what a Death!* What will *the End* of theſe Things be? That the Agonies of diſſolving Nature ſhall ſeize thee? That thy Soul ſhall be torn away from thy languiſhing Body, and thou *return to the Duſt from whence thou waſt taken* (k)? This is indeed *one awful Effect* of *Sin*. In theſe affecting Characters has GOD, through all Nations and all Ages of Men, *written* the awful Regiſter and Memorial of his holy Abhorrence of it, and righteous Diſpleaſure againſt it. But alas, all this ſolemn Pomp of Horror of *dying* is but *the Opening* of the dreadful Scene. It is but a rough Kind of Stroke, by which the Fetters are knock-

(c) Matt. v. 18.
(d) Gal. iii. 10.
(e) Pſal. xl.
(f) Mal. iii. 9.
(g) Deut. xxix. 20.
(h) Pſal. cix.
(i) Ezek. xviii. 4.
(k) Pſal. civ. 29.

ocked off, when the Criminal is led out to Torture and xecution.

§. 5. THUS ſaith the Lord, *The Wicked ſhall be turned to Hell*, even *all the Nations that forget* GOD (l). ho' there be *whole Nations* of them, their Multitudes d their Power ſhall be *no Defence* to them. They ſhall *driven into Hell* together; into that *flaming Priſon*, hich Divine Vengeance hath *prepared*; into *Tophet*, *hich is ordained of old*, even for *Royal Sinners* as well for others, ſo little can any *Human Diſtinction* protect: *e hath made it deep and large; the Pile thereof is Fire d much Wood; the Breath of the Lord like a Stream of imſtone ſhall kindle it* (m), and the flaming Torrent ll flow in upon it ſo faſt, that it ſhall be turned into *a a of liquid Fire*; or, as the Scripture alſo expreſſes it, *Lake burning with Fire and Brimſtone for ever and er* (n). *This is the Second Death*; and *the Death*, to ich thou, Oh Sinner, by the Word of GOD art omed.

§. 6. AND ſhall *this Sentence* ſtand upon Record *in in?* Shall *the Law* ſpeak it, and *the Goſpel* ſpeak it? d ſhall it never be pronounced *more audibly?* and will OD never *require* and *execute* the Puniſhment? He l, Oh Sinner, *require it*; and He will *execute it*; tho' may *ſeem* for a while *to delay*. For well doſt thou ow, that *he hath appointed a Day in which he will ge the* whole *World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man om he hath ordained, of which he has given Aſſurance having raiſed him from the Dead* (o). And when OD *judgeth the World*, Oh Reader, whoever thou art, will *judge thee*. And while I remind thee of it, I uld alſo remember, that He *will judge me*. And *wing the Terror of the Lord* (p), that I may *deliver wn Soul* (q), I would with all Plainneſs and Sincerity our to *deliver thine*.

§. 7. I THEREFORE *repeat* the ſolemn Warning: ou, Oh Sinner, ſhalt *ſtand before the Judgment Seat of riſt* (r). Thou ſhalt *ſee* that pompous Appearance; the ſcription of which is grown ſo familiar to thee, that the Repe-

) Pſal. ix. 17.
) Acts xvii. 31.
) 2 Cor. v. 10.
(m) Iſai. xxx. 33.
(p) 2 Cor. v. 11.
(n) Rev. xxi. 8.
(q) Ezek. xxxiii. 9.

Repetition of it makes *no Impreſſion* on thy Mind. ſurely, *ſtupid* as thou now art, the ſhrill *Trumpet* of *Arch-Angel* ſhall ſhake thy very Soul: And if *elſe* can *awaken* and *alarm thee*, the Convulſions Flames of *a diſſolving World* ſhall do it.

§ 8. Dost thou really think, that the Inten *Chriſt's final Appearance* is only to *recover his People* the Grave, and to *raiſe them* to Glory and Happin Whatever *Aſſurance* thou haſt, that there ſhall be *a R ſurrection of the Juſt*; thou haſt *the ſame*, that th ſhall alſo be *a Reſurrection of the Unjuſt* (s): That *he A ſeparate* the riſing Dead *one from another, as a Shep divideth his Sheep from the Goats* (t), with equal Certain and with infinitely greater Eaſe. Or can you imagi that He will only *make an Example* of ſome flagrant notorious Sinners, when it is ſaid, that *all the Dead*, b *ſmall and great*, ſhall *ſtand before GOD* (u); and even *he who knew not his Maſter's Will*, and conſequen ſeems of all others to have had the faireſt Excuſe for Omiſſion to obey it, yet even *he*, for that very Omiſ *ſhall be beaten*, tho' *with fewer Stripes* (w)? Or can think, that *a Sentence* to be delivered with ſo much P and Majeſty, *a Sentence*, by which the righteous Judgm of GOD is to be revealed, and to have its moſt conſpicu and final Triumph, will be *inconſiderable*; or *the P ment* to which it ſhall conſign the Sinner, be *ſlight* o *lerable*? There would have been little Reaſon to *app hend that*, even if we had been left barely to *our own C jectures*, what *that Sentence* ſhould be. But this is from being the Caſe: *Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, in his finite Condeſcenſion and Compaſſion, has been pleaſed give us *a Copy of the Sentence*, and no doubt, *a moſt ex Copy*; and the Words which contain it, are worthy being inſcribed on every Heart. *The King*, amidſt the Splendor and Dignity in which he ſhall then appe *ſhall ſay unto thoſe on his Right-Hand, Come, ye Bleſ of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you f the Foundation of the World* (x)! And *where the W of a King is, there is Power* indeed (y). And th Words have *a Power*, which may juſtly animate

He

(s) Acts xxiv. 15. (t) Matt. xxv. 32. (u) Rev. xx.
(w) Luke xii. 48. (x) Matt. xxv. 34. (y) Eccleſ. viii.

art of the *humble Christian*, under the most over-
elming Sorrow, and may fill him with *Joy unspeakable*
d full of Glory (z). To be pronounced *the Blessed of*
Lord! to be called to *a Kingdom!* to the immediate,
everlasting *Inheritance of it!* and of *such a Kingdom!*
well *prepared*, so glorious, so compleat, so exquisitely
ed for the Delight and Entertainment of *such Crea-*
es so formed and so renewed, that it shall appear *worthy*
eternal Counsels of GOD to have contrived it, *worthy*
eternal Love to have prepared it, and to have de-
hted itself with the Views of bestowing it upon his
ople: Behold, *a blessed Hope* indeed! *a lively* glorious
pe, to which we are *begotten again by the Resurrection*
Christ from the Dead (a), and *formed* by the sanctifying
fluence of *the Spirit of GOD* upon our Minds. But
s a Hope, from which *thou*, Oh Sinner, art at present
cluded; and methinks, *that* might be *grievous:* To
flect, "These gracious Words shall *Christ* speak *to*
some; to Multitudes, but *not to me:* On me there is *no*
Blessedness pronounced: For me there is *no Kingdom*
prepared." But is that *all?* Alas, Sinner, *our Lord*
th given thee *a dreadful Counterpart* to this. He has
d us, what He will *say to thee*, if thou continuest
hat thou art; *to thee*, and *all the Nations* of the im-
nitent and unbelieving World, be they *ever so nume-*
us, be the Rank of particular Criminals *ever so great.*
e shall say it to *the Kings of the Earth*, who have been
ebels against him, to *the Great and Rich Men, and*
e chief Captains, and the mighty Men, as well as to
ery Bondman, and every Freeman, of inferior Rank (b):
EPART ACCURSED, INTO EVERLASTING FIRE,
EPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS (c).
h, pause upon these *weighty Words*, that thou mayest
ter into something of the Importance of them!

§ 9. HE will say, DEPART: Thou shalt be *driven*
m his Presence, with Disgrace and Infamy. DEPART
CCURSED: You have *broken GOD's Law*, and *its*
rse falls upon you; and you are *under that Curse*, that
iding Curse: Henceforward you are to be *regarded* by
OD, and all his Creatures, as *an accursed* and *abomi-*
ble Thing; as the *most detestable*, and the *most miser-*
able

1 Pet. i. 8. (a) 1 Pet. i. 3. (b) Rev. vi. 15. (c) Matt. xxv. 41.

able Part of the Creation. You ſhall go INTO FIRE: And Oh conſider, *into what Fire!* Is it merely into *fierce Blaze*, which ſhall *conſume you in a Moment*, tho' with exquiſite Pain? *That* were *terrible.* But Oh, *ſuch Terrors* are not to be named with theſe. *Thine*, Sinner, is EVERLASTING FIRE: It is *that*, which *our Lord* hath in ſuch awful Terms deſcribed, as prevailing there, *where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*; and then ſays it a ſecond Time, *where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*; and again, in wonderful Compaſſion, a third Time, *where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched* (d). Nor was it *originally prepared*, or principally intended *for you:* It was PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS; for thoſe *firſt grand Rebels*, who were immediately upon their Fall doomed to it: And ſince you have *taken Part with them* in their *Apoſtacy*, you muſt *ſink with them* into that *flaming Ruin*; and *ſink ſo much the deeper*, as you have *deſpiſed a Saviour*, who was *never offered* to them. They muſt be *your Companions*, and *your Tormentors*, with whom you muſt *dwell for ever.* And *is it I*, that ſay *this?* or ſays not *the Law*, and *the Goſpel*, the ſame? Does not the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* expreſsly *ſay it*, who is *the faithful and true Witneſs* (e), and who *himſelf* is to *pronounce the Sentence?*

§ 10. AND when it is *thus pronounced*, and pronounced *by Him*, ſhall it not alſo be *executed?* Who could imagine the contrary? Who could imagine, there ſhould be *all this pompous Declaration*, to fill the Mind only with vain *Terror*; and that *this Sentence* ſhould *vaniſh into Smoak?* You may eaſily apprehend, that *this* would be *a great Reproach* to the Divine Adminiſtration, than if *Sentence* were *never to be paſſed.* And therefore, we might eaſily have inferred *the Execution* of it, from *the Proceſs* of the preceding Judgment. But leſt the treacherous Heart of Sinner ſhould *deceive him* with ſo vain a Hope, *the Aſſurance of that Execution* is immediately added in words memorable Terms. It *ſhall be done:* It ſhall *immediately* be done. *Then*, on that very Day, while the Sound of it is yet in their Ears, *the Wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting*

(d) Mark ix. 44, 46, 48. (e) Rev. iii. 14.

ſting Puniſhment (f): And *thou*, Oh Reader, whoever ou art, being found in their Number, *ſhalt go away with em*; ſhalt be *driven on*, among all theſe wretched ultitudes, and plunged with them *into eternal Ruin*. he wide *Gates of Hell* ſhall be *opened* to receive thee; ey ſhall be *ſhut againſt thee for ever* to incloſe thee; and *faſt barred*, by the Almighty Hand of *Divine Juſ-ce*, to prevent *all Hope*, all Poſſibility *of Eſcape* for er.

§. 11. AND now, *prepare* thyſelf *to meet the Lord thy OD* (g): Summon up all the Reſolution of thy Mind *endure ſuch a Sentence, ſuch an Execution* as this: For *will not meet thee as a Man* (h), whoſe Heart may metimes fail him, when about to exert a needful Act of verity, ſo that Compaſſion may prevail againſt Reaſon d Juſtice. No, *He will meet thee as a GOD*, whoſe hemes and Purpoſes are all *immoveable as his Throne*. herefore teſtify to thee *in his Name* this Day, that *if OD be true*, he will *thus ſpeak*; and that *if he be able*, will *thus act*. And, on Suppoſition of thy Conti-nce in thine Impenitence and Unbelief, thou art ught into *this miſerable Caſe*; that *if GOD be not er falſe* or *weak*, thou art *undone*, thou art *eternally one*.

REFLECTION *of a Sinner, ſtruck with the Terror of this Sentence.*

WRETCH *that I am!* What ſhall I do? or whither ſhall I flee? *I am weighed in the Bal-ance, and am found wanting* (i). This is indeed *my Doom*; the Doom I am to expect from the Mouth of *Chriſt* himſelf; from the Mouth of *Him*, that died for he Redemption and Salvation of Men. *Dreadful Sen-tence!* and ſo much *the more dreadful*, when conſi-ered in that View! To what ſhall I *look* to ſave me om it? To whom ſhall I *call?* Shall I ſay *to the ocks, Fall upon me, and to the Hills, Cover me* (k)? hat ſhould I *gain* by that? Were I indeed *over-helmed* with *Rocks* and *Mountains*, they could not *conceal*

(f) Matt. xxv. 46. (g) Amos iv. 12. (h) Iſai. xlvii. 3.
Dan. v. 27. (k) Luke xxiii. 30.

" *conceal me* from the Notice of *His Eye*; and *His* " could *reach me* with as much Eaſe *there*, as any " elſe.

" *Wretch indeed* that I am! Oh that I had *never* " *born!* Oh that I had *never known* the *Dignity* " *Prerogative* of the Rational Nature! *Fatal Prero* " *tive* indeed, that renders me obnoxious to *Condem* " *tion* and *Wrath!* Oh that I had *never been inſtru* " in the *Will of* GOD at all, rather than that *h* " *thus inſtructed*, I ſhould have diſregarded and *tra* " greſſed it! Would to GOD, I had been *allied* to " *meaneſt* of the *Human Race*, to them that *come* " *eſt* to the State of *the Brutes*, rather than that I *ſh* " have had *my Lot* in *cultivated Life*, amidſt ſo *m* " of the *Improvements of Reaſon*, and (dreadful *Re* " tion!) amidſt ſo many of the *Advantages of Re* " too! and thus to have *perverted all* to my own *D* " ſtruction!— Oh that GOD would *take away* " *Rational Soul!* But alas, it will *live for ever*; will " to *feel the Agonies* of *eternal Death.*— Why *ha* " *ſeen* the Beauties and Glories of *a World like this*, " exchange it for *that flaming Priſon!* Why *ha* " *taſted* ſo many of *my Creator's Bounties*, to *w* " out at laſt *the Dregs of His Wrath!* Why *ha* " *known* the Delights of *ſocial Life* and *friendly Conv* " to exchange them for the horrid Company of *D* " and *damned Spirits* in *Tophet!* Oh *who can dwell* " them *in devouring Flames! who can lie down* " them *in everlaſting, everlaſting, everlaſting B* " *ings* (l)!

" But whom have I *to blame* in all this, but *my* " What have I *to accuſe*, but *my own ſtupid incorr* " *Folly?* On what is all this terrible Ruin *to be cha* " but on this one *fatal curſed Cauſe*, that having *br* " *GOD's Law*, I rejected *His Goſpel* too?

" Yet *ſtay*, Oh my Soul, in the Midſt of all *t* " doleful, foreboding Complaints. Can I ſay, *th* " have *finally rejected the Goſpel?* Am I not *to this* " under the Sound of it? *The Sentence* is not yet " *forth againſt me*, in a determinate Manner. I *am* " yet *certainly ſealed up under Wrath.* Thro' all

" *glo*

(l) Iſai. xxxiii. 14.

oomy Proſpect *one Ray of Hope* breaks in, and *it is ſſible I may yet be delivered.*

Reviving Thought! *Rejoice* in it, Oh my Soul, tho' be *with Trembling*; and turn thyſelf *immediately* to at GOD, who, tho' provoked by Ten Thouſand ffences, has not yet *ſworn in His Wrath, that thou alt never* be permitted, to hold farther Intercourſe ith Him, or to *enter into His Reſt* (m).

I do then, Oh Bleſſed Lord, proſtrate myſelf *in e Duſt* before Thee. I own, I am *a condemned* and *iſerable Creature.* But my Language is that of the mble *Publican, GOD be merciful to me a Sin-r* (n)! Some general and confuſed Apprehenſions I ve of *a Way*, by which I may *poſſibly eſcape.* Oh OD, whatever *that Way* is, *ſhew it me*, I beſeech ee! Point it out *ſo plainly*, that I may not be able miſtake it! And Oh, *reconcile my Heart to it*, be ever ſo *humbling*, be it ever ſo *painful!*

Surely, Lord, I have *much to learn*; but be Thou *Teacher!* Stay for a little *Thine up-lifted Hand*; d in Thine infinite Compaſſion *delay the Stroke*, till nquire a little farther, how I may *finally avoid it!*"

(m) Pſal. xcv. 11. (n) Luke xviii. 13.

CHAP. VII.

The helpleſs State of the Sinner under Condemnation.

The Sinner urged to conſider, how he can be ſaved from this impending Ruin. §. 1, 2. (1.) *Not by any Thing he can offer.* §. 3. (2.) *Nor by any Thing he can endure.* §. 4. (3.) *Nor by any Thing he can do in the Courſe of future Duty.* §. 5. (4.) *Nor by any Alliance with Fellow-Sinners, on Earth, or in Hell.* §. 6. (5.) *Nor by any Interpoſition, or Interceſſion, of Angels or Saints in his Favour.* §. 9. *Hint of the only Method to be afterwards more largely explained.* Ibid. *Lamentation of a Sinner in this miſerable Condition.*

§. 1. SINNER, Thou haſt heard *the Sentence of God* as it *ſtands upon Record* in His ſacred and immutable *Word*. And wilt thou *lie down under it* in everlaſting Deſpair? Wilt thou *make no Attempt* to be delivered from it, when *it ſpeaks* nothing leſs than *Eternal Death* to thy Soul? If *a Criminal*, condemned by Human Laws, has but the leaſt *Shadow of Hope*, that he may *poſſibly eſcape*, he is *all Attention* to it. If there be a *Friend*, who he thinks can help him, with what *Importunity* does he intreat the Interpoſition of that Friend? And, even while he is *before the Judge*, how difficult it often *to force him away* from the Bar, while the Cry of *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy*, may be heard, tho' it be ſo unſeaſonable? A meer *Poſſibility* that it may make ſome Impreſſion, makes him *eager in it*, and unwilling to be ſilenced and removed.

§. 2. W

2. WILT thou not then, Oh Sinner, ere yet *Execu-* is done, *that Execution* which may perhaps be done *this Day*, wilt thou not caſt about in thy Thoughts, *what ſures* may be taken *for Deliverance?* Yet what ſures *can be taken?* Conſider attentively, for it is *an air of Moment.* Thy Wiſdom, thy Power, thy E- nence, or thine Intereſt, can never be exerted *on a ter Occaſion.* If thou canſt *help thyſelf*, do. If thou *any ſecret Source* of Relief, *go not out of thyſelf* for r Aſſiſtance. If thou haſt *any Sacrifice* to offer; if haſt *any Strength* to exert; yea, if thou haſt *any es* on Earth, or in the Inviſible World, who can de- and deliver thee; *take thine own Way*, ſo that thou eſt but be *delivered at all*, and we may not *ſee thy n.* But ſay, Oh Sinner, in the Preſence of GOD, *t Sacrifice* thou wilt preſent, *what Strength* thou exert, *what Allies* thou wilt have recourſe to, on *rgent, ſo hopeleſs* an Occaſion: For *hopeleſs* I muſt ed pronounce it, if *ſuch Methods* are taken.

3. THE *Juſtice of GOD* is injured: Haſt thou *Atonement* to make to it? If thou waſt brought to *Enquiry* and *Propoſal* like that of the awakened Sinner, *rewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow myſelf re the high GOD? Shall I come before him with nt-Offerings, with Calves of a Year old? Will the be pleaſed with Thouſands of Rams, or with Ten ſands of Rivers of Oil* (a)? Alas, wert thou as great nce as *Solomon* himſelf, and couldſt thou indeed pur- *ſuch Sacrifices* as theſe, there would be *no Room* to tion them. *Lebanon would not be ſufficient to burn, all the Beaſts thereof for a Burnt-Offering* (b). Even r *that Diſpenſation*, which admitted and required *rifices* in ſome Caſes, *the Blood of Bulls and of Goats*, it exempted the Offender from farther Temporal iſhment, *could not take away Sin* (c), nor prevail by Means to *purge the Conſcience* in the Sight of GOD. *that Soul*, that had *done ought preſumptuouſly*, was llowed to bring any *Sin-Offering* at all, but was con- ned to *die without Mercy* (d). Now GOD and e own Conſcience know, that *thine Offences* have

) Mic. vi. 6, 7. (b) Iſai. xl. 16. (c) Heb. x. 4.
) Numb. xv. 30.

not been *merely* the Errors of *Ignorance* and *Inadvertency*, but that thou *haſt ſinned with an high Hand* in repeated aggravated Inſtances, as thou haſt acknowledged above. —— Shouldſt thou add, with the wretched Sinner deſcribed above, *Shall I give my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul?* What could *the Blood of a beloved Child* do in ſuch a Caſe, but *dye thy Crimes* ſo much the deeper, and add yet unknown Horror to them? Thou haſt *offended* a Being of Infinite Majeſty; and if *that Offence* is to be *expiated by Blood*, it muſt be by *another Kind of Blood* than that which flows in the Veins of *thy Children*, or in *thine own*.

§. 4. WILT thou then *ſuffer thyſelf*, till thou haſt made full Satisfaction? But *where* ſhall *that Satisfaction* be made?— Shall it be *by any Calamities* to be endured *in this mortal momentary Life?* Is the *Juſtice* of GOD then eſteemed *ſo little a Thing*, that the *Sorrows of a few Days* ſhould ſuffice to *anſwer its Demands?* Or doſt thou ſpeak of *future Sufferings*, in the *Inviſible World?* If thou doſt, *that is not Deliverance*; and without Regard to that I may venture to ſay, When thou haſt *made full Satisfaction*, thou wilt be *releaſed:* When thou haſt *paid the utmoſt Farthing* of that Debt, thy *Priſon Doors* ſhall be *opened*. In the mean time, thou muſt make *thy Bed in Hell* (f): And, Oh unhappy Man, wilt thou *lie down there*, with *a ſecret Hope*, that the Moment will come, when the Rigour of *Divine Juſtice* will *not be* ſatisfied to inflict any Thing more than thou haſt endured, and when thou mayeſt *claim thy Diſcharge* as *a Matter of Right?* It would indeed *be well for thee*, if thou couldſt carry down with thee *ſuch a Hope*, falſe and flattering as it is: But alas, thou wilt ſee Things in ſo juſt a Light that to have *no Comfort but this*, will be *eternal Deſpair*. That one Word of thy Sentence, EVERLASTING FIRE, that one Declaration, *The Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*; will be *ſufficient* to ſtrike ſuch a Thought into *blank Confuſion*, and to overwhelm thee with *Deſpair, Agony* and *Horror*.

§. 5. OR do you think, that your *future Reformation* and *Diligence in Duty for the Time to come*, will pay

(e) Mic. vi. 7. (f) Pſal. cxxix. 8.

r Discharge from this Sentence? Take heed, Sinner, *hat Kind of Obedience* thou thinkeſt of offering to an ly GOD. *That* muſt be *ſpotleſs* and *compleat*, which Infinite Sanctity can *approve* and *accept*, if he con- er thee in thyſelf alone: There muſt be no Incon- ncy, no Forgetfulneſs, *no Mixture of Sin*, attending it. nd wilt thou, *enfeebled as thou art*, undertake to render *h an Obedience*, and that *for all the Remainder of thy ſe?* In vain wouldſt thou *attempt it*, even for one y. *New Guilt* would immediately plunge thee into *w Ruin*. But if it did not, if from this Moment to the ry End of thy Life all were *as compleat Obedience* as Law of GOD required from *Adam* in Paradiſe, would t be ſufficient to *cancel paſt Guilt?* Would it *diſcharge old Debt*, that thou hadſt not contracted a new one? *ſer this to thy Neighbour*, and ſee if *he will accept it for yment*; and if *he will not*, wilt thou preſume to *offer* to thy GOD!

§. 6. BUT I will not *multiply Words* on ſo plain a bject. While I ſpeak thus, *Time* is paſſing away, *ath* preſſes on, and *Judgment* is approaching. And at can *ſave thee* from theſe awful Scenes, or what can *tect thee* in them? Can *the World* ſave thee? that vain ſive *Idol* of thy Wiſhes and Purſuits, to which thou ſacrificing thine Eternal Hopes? Well doſt thou know, t it will *utterly forſake thee*, when thou *needeſt it moſt*; d that *not one of its Enjoyments* can be *carried along ith thee* into the Inviſible State: No, not ſo much as *Triſle to remember it by*; if thou couldſt *deſire to re- mber* ſo inconſtant, and ſo treacherous a Friend, as *World* has been.

§. 7. AND when you are dead, or when you are ing, *can your ſinful Companions ſave you?* Is there *any of them*, if he were ever ſo deſirous of doing it, that *give unto GOD a Ranſom for you* (g), to deliver you m *going down to the Grave*, or from *going down to ll?* Alas, you will probably be *ſo ſenſible of this*, that en you lie *on the Border of the Grave*, you will be *willing to ſee*, or to *converſe with thoſe*, that were once *r favourite Companions*. They will *afflict you*, rather n *relieve you*, even *then*: How much leſs can they relieve

(g) Pſal. xlix. 7.

relieve you *before the Bar of* GOD, when they
overwhelmed with their own Condemnation?

§. 8. As for *the Powers of Darkneſs*, you are
they will be far from *any Ability*, or *Inclination* to
you. *Satan* has been watching and labouring for
Deſtruction, and he will *triumph in it*. But if there
be any thing of *an amicable Confederacy* between
what would *that* be, but *an Aſſociation in Ruin*? For
Day of Judgment of ungodly Men, will alſo be *the*
ment of theſe *rebellious Spirits*; and the *Fire* into
thou, Oh Sinner, *muſt depart*, is that which was
for the Devil and his Angels (h).

§. 9. WILL *the Celeſtial Spirits* then *ſave thee*?
they interpoſe their *Power*, or their *Prayers*, in
vour? An Interpoſition of *Power*, when *Sentence*
forth againſt thee, were an Act of *Rebellion againſt*
ven, which theſe holy and excellent Creatures would
hor. And when *the final Pleaſure of the*
known, inſtead of *interceding in vain* for the
Criminal, *they would rather*, with ardent Zeal
Glory of their Lord, and cordial Acquieſcence in
Determination of his Wiſdom and Juſtice, *prepare*
ecute it. Yea, difficult as it may at preſent be
ceive it, it is *a certain Truth*, that the *Servants of*
who now moſt tenderly love you, and moſt affection
ſeek your Salvation; not excepting *thoſe*, who are
you in the neareſt Bonds of Nature, or of Friendſhip;
they ſhall put their *Amen* to it. Now indeed *their*
yearn over you, and *their Eye poureth out Tears* on
Account: Now they *expoſtulate* with you, and
with GOD for you, if by any Means, while yet there
Hope, you may be *plucked as a Firebrand out of the*
ing (i). But alas, *their Remonſtrances* you *will not*
and as for *their Prayers*, what ſhould they *aſk for*
What but *this*, that you may *ſee your ſelves* to be
and that, *utterly deſpairing* of any *Help* from *your ſelves*,
from *any created Power*, you may lie before GOD in
mility and *Brokenneſs of Heart*; that *ſubmitting your ſelves*
to his righteous Judgment, and in an *utter Renunciation*
of all *Self-Dependance*, and of all *Creature-Dependance*
you may *lift up an humble Look* towards Him, as
from

(h) Matt. xxv. 41. (i) Amos iv. 11.

the Depths of Hell, if *peradventure* He may *have* *passion* upon you, and may Himself *direct you* to that *Method of Reſcue*, which, while Things continue as preſent Circumſtances they are, neither *Earth*, nor *ll*, nor *Heaven* can afford you.

A LAMENTATION *of a Sinner, in this miſerable Condition.*

OH doleful, uncomfortable, helpleſs State! Oh *Wretch that I am*, to have reduced myſelf to it! Poor, empty, miſerable, abandon'd Creature! Where *my Pride*, and the *Haughtineſs of my Heart*? Where re my *Idol Deities, whom I have loved, and ſerved, after whom I have walked, and whom I have ſought* (k), hilſt I have been *multiplying my Tranſgreſſions* againſt *he Majeſty of Heaven*? Is there *no Heart* to have ompaſſion upon me? Is there *no Hand* to ſave me? *Have Pity upon me, have Pity upon me, Oh my Friends, r the Hand of GOD hath touched me* (l), hath ſeized e! I feel myſelf in it, and *what ſhall I do*? Perhaps *they have Pity upon me:* But alas, how feeble a ompaſſion! Only, if there be *any where* in the hole Compaſs of Nature *any Help*, tell me *where it ay be found!* Oh *point it out*; direct me towards it; rather, confounded and aſtoniſhed as my Mind is, *ke me by the Hand*, and *lead me to it!*

Oh ye *Miniſters of the Lord*, whoſe Office it is to ide and comfort diſtreſſed Souls, *take Pity upon me!* ear, I am *a Pattern* of many other *helpleſs Creatures*, ho have the like Need of *your Aſſiſtance*. Lay aſide your her Cares, to *care for my Soul*; to care for *this pre- us Soul of mine*, which *lies* as it were *bleeding to ath*, (if that Expreſſion may be uſed,) while *you* rhaps hardly afford me *a Look*, or glancing an Eye on me, *paſs over to the other Side* (m). Yet alas, a Caſe like mine, what can *your Interpoſition* avail, it be alone? *If the LORD do not help me, how n ye help me* (n)?

Oh *GOD of the Spirits of all Fleſh* (o), I lift up " mine

Jer. viii. 2. (l) Job xix. 21. (m) Luke x. 31.
2 Kings vi. 27. (o) Numb. xvi. 2.

" mine Eyes unto Thee, and *cry unto Thee* as *out of*
" *Belly of Hell* (p). I cry unto Thee at leaſt *from*
" *Borders of it.* Yet while I lie before Thee *in this*
" *finite Diſtreſs*, I know that *Thine Almighty Power*
" *boundleſs Grace* can ſtill *find out a Way* for my
" very.

" Thou art *He*, whom I have moſt of all *injured*
" *affronted*; and yet *from Thee alone* muſt I now
" *Redreſs. Againſt Thee, Thee only have I ſinned,*
" *done Evil in thy Sight*; (q); ſo that *Thou might*
" *juſtified when Thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when*
" *judgeſt*, tho' Thou ſhouldſt this Moment
" to Eternal Miſery. And yet I find ſomething
" ſecretly *draws me to Thee*, as if I might *find*
" *there*, where I have *deſerved* the moſt aggra
" *Deſtruction.* Bleſſed GOD, *I have deſtroyed*
" *but in Thee is my Help* (r), if there can be Help

" I know in the general, that *Thy Ways are*
" *our Ways, nor Thy Thoughts as our Thoughts*; but
" as *high above them, as the Heavens are above*
" *Earth* (s). *Have Mercy* therefore *upon me, Oh GO*
" *according to thy Loving-Kindneſs, according to*
" *Multitude of Thy tender Mercies* (t)! Oh point out
" Path to *the City of Refuge!* Oh *lead me* Thyſelf
" *the Way everlaſting* (u)! I know in the general,
" *Thy Goſpel* is the *only Remedy:* Oh teach *Thy Serv*
" to *adminiſter it!* Oh prepare *mine Heart* to
" *it!* and ſuffer not, as in many Inſtances, *that*
" *nity* which has ſpread itſelf thro' all my Nature,
" turn *that noble Medicine* into *Poiſon!*"

(p) Jonah ii. 2. (q) Pſal. li. 4. (r) Hoſ.
(s) Iſai. lv. 8, 9. (t) Pſal. li. 1. (u) Pſal. cxxix.

CHA

CHAP. VIII.

ews of Salvation by CHRIST brought to the convinced and condemned Sinner.

e awful Things which have hitherto been said, intend-d, not to grieve, but to help. §. 1. *After some Re-flection on the Pleasure with which a Minister of the Gospel may deliver the Message with which he is charged,* §. 2. *and some Reasons for the Repetition of what is in Speculation so generally known,* §. 3. *The Author proceeds briefly to declare the Substance of these glad Tidings; viz. That* GOD, *having in his Infinite Compassion sent his Son to die for Sinners, is now reconcileable thro' Him:* §. 4—6. *So that the most heinous Transgressions shall be entirely pardoned to Believers, and they made compleatly and eternally happy.* §. 7, 8. *The Sinner's Reflection on this good News.*

1. MY dear Reader! It is the great *Design* of *the Gospel*, and where-ever it is cordially re-ved, it is the glorious *Effect* of it, to *fill the Heart* h Sentiments of *Love*; to teach us to *abhor* all unne-ary *Rigour* and *Severity*, and to *delight*, not in the *ief*, but in the *Happiness* of our Fellow-Creatures. I hardly apprehend, how *he* can be *a Christian*, who s *Pleasure* in the *Distress* which appears even in *a-te*; much less in *that* of a *Human Mind*; and espe-ly, in *such Distress* as the Thoughts I have been pro-ing must give, if there be any due Attention to their ight and Energy. I have often felt *a tender Regret*, le I have been representing these Things; and I could e *wished* from mine Heart, that it had not been *neces-*

sary

ſary to have placed them in ſo *ſevere*, and ſo *painful* a *Light*. But now I am addreſſing myſelf to *a Part of my Work*, which I undertake with *unutterable Pleaſure*, and to *that*, which indeed I had in View, in all the *awful Things* which I have already been laying before you. I have been ſhewing you, that, if you hitherto have lived in a State of *Impenitency* and *Sin*, you are *condemned* by GOD's righteous Judgment, and have in yourſelf *no Spring of Hope*, and *no Poſſibility of Deliverance*: But I mean not to *leave you* under *this ſad Apprehenſion*, to lie down and die *in Deſpair*, complaining of that *cruel Zeal*, which has *tormented you before the Time* (a).

§. 2. ARISE, Oh thou *dejected Soul*, that art *proſtrate in the Duſt* before GOD, and *trembling* under the Terrors of *His Righteous Sentence*; for I am commiſſioned to tell thee, that tho' *thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf*, in GOD *is thine Help* (b). I bring thee *good Tidings of great Joy* (c), which *delight mine own Heart*, while I proclaim them, and will I hope reach, and *revive* thine even *the Tidings of Salvation*, by the *Blood* and *Righteouſneſs* of the REDEEMER. And I give it thee, for thy greater Security, *in the Words* of a gracious and ſo giving GOD, that *He is in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, and not imputing to them their Treſpaſſes* (d).

§. 3. THIS is *the beſt News* that ever was heard, *the moſt important Meſſage* which GOD ever ſent to his Creatures: And tho' I doubt not at all, but *living*, as you have done, *in a Chriſtian Country*, you have heard *it often*, perhaps a Thouſand and a Thouſand Times; I will, with all Simplicity and Plainneſs, *repeat it* to you *again*, and repeat it as if you had *never heard it before*. If thou, Oh Sinner, ſhouldſt now *for the firſt Time* hear it, then will it be *as a New Goſpel* unto thee, that *familiar* to thine Ear; nor ſhall it be *grievous for me* to ſpeak what is ſo common, *ſince to you it is ſafe* and neceſſary (e). They who are moſt deeply and intimately *acquainted with it*, inſtead of being *cloyed* and *ſatiated*, will hear it with *diſtinguiſhed Pleaſure*; and as for those who have *hitherto ſlighted it*, I am ſure they had

(a) Matt. viii. 29. (b) Hoſ. xiii. 9. (c) Luke ii.
(d) 2 Cor. v. 19. (e) Phil. iii. 1.

hear it again. Nor is it *absolutely impossible*, that *e one Soul* at least *may read these Lines*, who hath *er* been *clearly* and *fully instructed* in this important ctrine, tho' *his everlasting All* depends on knowing receiving it. I will therefore take Care, that such ne *shall not have it to plead* at the Bar of GOD, that he *lived in a Christian Country*, he was *never* plainly faithfully *taught* the *Doctrine of Salvation by* JESUS IST, *the Way, the Truth, and the Life, by whom* ne *we come unto the Father* (f).

. 4. I DO therefore *testify unto you this Day*, that the y and gracious *Majesty* of Heaven and Earth, fore- ng *the fatal Apostacy* into which the whole Human ce would fall, *did not determine* to deal in a Way of *t and rigorous Severity* with us, so as to *seal us up* un- *universal Ruin* and *inevitable Damnation:* But on the trary, he *determined* to enter into *a Treaty of Peace Reconciliation*, and to publish *to all*, whom *the Gospel* uld reach, *the express Offers of Life and Glory*, in a tain *Method*, which his Infinite Wisdom judged *suit- le* to the *Purity of his Nature*, and the *Honour of his vernment.* This *Method* was indeed *a most astonishing* which, familiar as it is to our Thoughts and our ngues, I cannot recollect and mention without great azement. He *determined* to send *His own Son* into World, *the Brightness of his Glory, and the express ge of his Person* (g), Partaker of his own Di- Perfections and Glories, to be not merely *a Teacher ighteousness*, and *a Messenger of Grace*, but also *a rifice for the Sins of Men*; and would consent to *his ing them*, on no other Condition but *this*, that *he ld* not only *labour*, but *die* in the *Cause*.

. 5. ACCORDINGLY, at such *a Period of Time* as In- e Wisdom saw *most convenient*, the *Lord Jesus Christ* eared in *Human Flesh*; and after he had *gone thro'* in- nt, and long continued *Fatigues*, and *borne* all the pre- ng *Injuries*, which the Ingratitude and Malice of Men d inflict, he voluntarily *submitted himself to Death, the Death of the Cross* (h); and having been *delivered ur Offences, was raised again for our Justification* (i).

After

John xiv. 6. (g) Heb. i. 3. (h) Phil. ii. 8.
Rom. iv. 25.

After *his Resurrection*, he continued *long enough* on Earth to give his Followers *most convincing Evidence* of it, and then *ascended into Heaven in their Sight* (k); and *sent down his Spirit* from thence *upon his Apostles*, to enable them, in the most persuasive and authoritative Manner, to *preach the Gospel* (l): And he has *given it in Charge* to them, and to those who in every Age succeed them in this Part of their Office, that it should be *published to every Creature* (m), that *all who believe in him may be saved*, by Virtue of its abiding Energy, and the immutable Power and Grace of its *Divine Author*, who is *the same Yesterday, To-day, and for Ever* (n).

§. 6. THIS *Gospel* do I therefore *now preach*, and proclaim *unto thee*, Oh Reader, with the sincerest Desire that, thro' Divine Grace, it may *this very Day* be *Salvation to thy Soul* (o). Know therefore, and consider, whosoever thou art, that *as surely* as these Words are now before thine Eyes, *so sure it is*, that the *Incarnate Son of GOD* was *made a Spectacle to the World, and to Angels, and to Men* (p); his *Back* torn with *Scourges*, his *Head* with *Thorns*, his *Limbs* stretched out as on the Rack, and *nailed to the accursed Tree*; and in this miserable Condition he was *hung up by his Hands and his Feet*, as an Object of publick Infamy and Contempt. Thus did he *die*, in the Midst of all the *Taunts* and *Insults* of his cruel Enemies, who *thirsted for his Blood*; and, which was the saddest Circumstance of all, in the Midst of *these Agonies*, with which he closed the most innocent, perfect, and useful Life that was ever spent on Earth, he had not *those Supports* of the *Divine Presence*, which *sinful Men* have often experienced, when they have been *suffering* for the Testimony of their Conscience. *They* have often burst out into *Transports of Joy* and *Songs of Praise*, while their Executioners have been glutting their hellish Malice, and more than savage Barbarity, by making their Torments artificially grievous; but *the crucified Jesus* cried out, in the Distress of his spotless and holy Soul, *My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me* (q)?

§ 7. L

(k) Acts i. 9--11. (l) Luke xxiv. 40. (m) Mark xvi.
(n) Heb. xiii. 8. (o) Luke xix. 9. (p) 1 Cor. iv.
(q) Matt. xxvii. 46.

7. Look upon *our dear Redeemer!* Look up to *mournful, dreadful,* yet in one View, *delightful* *acle*; and then ask thine own Heart, *Do I believe* *Jesus* suffered and died thus? And *why* did he *suffer* *die?* Let me answer in GOD's own Words, *He* *wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for* *Iniquities, and the Chastisement of our Peace was* *him, that by his Stripes we might be healed: It* *sed the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to Grief,* *n he made his Soul an Offering for Sin*; for *the Lord* *on him the Iniquity of us all* (r). So that I may ess you in the Words of the Apostle, *Be it known unto* *herefore, that through this Man is preached unto you* *Forgiveness of Sins* (s); as it was *his Command,* just he rose from the Dead, that *Repentance and Remis-* *of Sins should be preached in his Name unto all Na-* *, beginning at Jerusalem* (t); the very Place, where Blood had so lately been shed in such a cruel Manner, therefore testify to you, in the Words of another red Writer, that *Christ was made Sin,* that is, a Offering *for us, tho' he knew no Sin, that we might* *ade the Righteousness of GOD in him* (u); that is, thro' *the Righteousness* he has wrought out, and *the* *ement* he has made, we might be *accepted by GOD* *ghteous,* and be not only *pardoned,* but received into avour. *To you is the Word of this Salvation sent* (x); o you, Oh Reader, are *the Blessings of it* even now *d* by GOD; *sincerely offered,* so that, after all that e said under the former Heads, it is not your having *n the Law of GOD,* that shall prove *your Ruin,* if lo not also *reject his Gospel.* It is not all those *Le-* *of Sins,* which rise up *in Battle Array* against you, hall be *able to destroy you,* if *Unbelief* do not lead on, and *final Impenitency* do not bring up the Rear. w, that *Guilt is a timorous Thing*; I will therefore *in the Words of GOD himself*; nor can any be comfortable: *He that believeth on the Son, hath* *sting Life* (y); *and he shall never come into Con-* *ation* (z): *There is therefore now no Condemnation,*

Isai. liii. 5, 6, 10. (s) Acts xiii. 38. (t) Luke xxiv. 47.
2 Cor. v. 21. (x) Acts xiii. 26. (y) John iii. 36.
John v. 24.

no Kind or Degree of it, *to them*, to any one of [illegible] *who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the* [illegible] *but after the Spirit* (a). You have indeed been a *great Sinner*, and your Offences have truly been [illegible] with *most heinous Aggravations*; nevertheless you [illegible] rejoice in the Assurance, that *where Sin hath abou* there *shall Grace much more abound* (b); that *wher hath reigned unto Death*, where it has had its mos limited Sway, and most unresisted Triumph, there *Righteousness reign to eternal Life thro' Jesus Chris Lord* (c). That *Righteousness*, to which on *believing him* thou wilt be intitled, shall not only *break Chains*, by which *Sin* is (as it were) dragging thee its Chariot Wheels with a furious Pace to E Ruin; but it shall *clothe thee with the Robes of Sal tion*, shall fix thee on *a Throne of Glory*, where t shalt *live and reign for ever* among the Princes of H ven; shalt *reign* in immortal Beauty and Joy, wit *one remaining Scar* of Divine Displeasure upon t without *any single Mark*, by which it could be kn that thou hadst ever been obnoxious to Wrath, Curse; except it be *an Anthem of Praise*, to *the L that was slain, and has washed thee from thy Sin his own Blood* (d).

§. 8. Nor is it *necessary*, in order to thy being *eased from Guilt*, and *intitled to* this high and com *Felicity*, that thou shouldst, *before* thou wilt venture *apply to Jesus*, bring *any good Works of thine own* to commend thee to his Acceptance. It is indeed true, if *thy Faith* be *sincere*, it will certainly *produce* But I have the Authority of *the Word of GOD* t thee, that if thou *this Day* sincerely *believest in the of the Son of GOD*, thou shalt *this Day* be *taken* [illegible] *his Care*, and be *numbered* among those of *his Sheep whom*, he hath graciously declared, that *he will Eternal Life*, and that *they shall never perish* (e). T hast *no Need* therefore *to say, Who shall go up into ven, or who shall descend into the Deep* for me? *For Word is nigh thee, in thy Mouth, and in thine Heart* With this *joyful Message* I leave thee; with this *fa*

(a) Rom. viii. 1. (b) Rom. v. 20. (c) Rom. v.
(d) Rev. i. 5. (e) John x. 28. (f) Rom. x. 6,

g, indeed *worthy of all Acceptation* (g); with this *l*, Oh Sinner, which is *my Life*; and which, if doſt not rejcct it, will be *thine* too.

The Sinner's REFLECTION *on this good News.*

OH my Soul, how *aſtoniſhing* is *the Meſſage*, which thou haſt *this Day received!* I have indeed *often heard it before*; and it is grown *ſo common* me, that *the Surprize* is *not ſenſible*. But reflect, h my Soul, *what it is* thou haſt heard; and ſay, hether *the Name of the* SAVIOUR, whoſe Meſſage it may not well be called *Wonderful, Counſellor* (h), hen He diſplays before thee *ſuch Wonders of Love*, d propoſes to thee *ſuch Counſels of Peace!*

Bleſſed Jeſus, is it indeed thus! Is it not *the Fiction* the *Human Mind?* Surely *it is not!* What *Human lind* could have *invented* or *conceived it?* Is it *a ain, certain Fact*, that Thou didſt *leave* the Magnience and Joy of *the Heavenly World*, in Compaſſion *ſuch a Wretch* as I! Oh hadſt Thou, from *that ight* of Dignity and Felicity, only *looked down on me for a Moment*, and ſent *ſome gracious Word to* for my Direction and Comfort, even by the *leaſt Thy Servants*, juſtly might I have *proſtrated my-f* in grateful Admiration, and have *kiſſed the very teps* of him, *that publiſhed the Salvation* (i). But ſt Thou *condeſcend* to be *Thyſelf* the Meſſenger! *hat Grace* had *that* been, tho' Thou hadſt *but once* Perſon *made the Declaration*, and immediately *reurned back* to the Throne, from whence Divine Comſſion brought Thee down! But this is not *all the iumph* of Thine illuſtrious *Grace*. It not only *ught Thee down to Earth*, but *kept Thee here*, in a il and wretched *Tabernacle*, for long ſucceſſive Years: d at length, it *coſt Thee thy Life*, and *ſtretched Thee out* a Malefactor *upon the Croſs*, after Thou hadſt *borne ſult and Cruelty*, which it may juſtly *wound my art* ſo much as to think of. And thus Thou haſt

(g) 1 Tim. i. 15. (h) Iſai. ix. 6. (i) Iſai. lii. 7.

" *atoned injur'd Justice,* and *redeemed me to G*
" *with Thine own Blood* (k).

" What shall I say? *Lord, I believe; help Thou*
" *Unbelief* (l)! It seems to *put Faith to the Stretch*
" mit, what it indeed exceeds *the utmost Stretch of*
" *nation* to conceive. Blessed, for ever blessed be
" *Name,* Oh Thou *Father of Mercies,* that Thou
" *contrived the Way!* Eternal Thanks to *the Lamb*
" *was slain,* and to *that kind Providence* that *sent*
" *Word of this Salvation* to me! Oh let me not, for
" Thousand Worlds, *receive the Grace of* GOD
" *vain* (m)! Oh impress *this Gospel* upon my Soul,
" *its saving Virtue* be diffused over every Faculty!
" it not only be *heard,* and *acknowledged,* and *pro*
" but *felt!* Make it *Thy Power to* my eternal
" *tion* (n); and raise me to that *humble tender Grat*
" to that *active unwearied Zeal* in Thy Service, w
" becomes one *to whom so much is forgiven* (o),
" forgiven *upon such Terms* as these!

" I feel *a sudden Glow* in mine *Heart,* while
" *Tidings* are sounding in mine *Ears:* But, Oh,
" not be *a slight superficial Transport!* Oh let not
" which I would fain call my *Christian Joy,* be
" *foolish Laughter,* with which I have been so ma
" chanted, *like the crackling Blaze of Thorns*
" *Pot* (p)! Oh teach me *to secure* this *mighty*
" this *glorious Hope,* in the *Method* which Tho
" appointed! and preserve me from mistaking
" *of Nature,* while it catches a Glimpse of it
" from Destruction, for that *Consent of Grace,*
" embraces and insures the Deliverance!

(k) Rev. v. 9. (l) Mark ix. 24. (m) 2 Co
(n) Rom. i. 16. (o) Luke vii. 47. (p) Eccles.

CH

CHAP. IX.

more particular Account of the Way, by which this Salvation is to be obtained.

Enquiry into the Way of Salvation by Chriſt being ppoſed, §. 1. *The Sinner is in general directed to Faith nd Repentance,* §. 2. *and urged to give up all Self-ependance,* §. 3. *and to ſeek Salvation by Free race.* §. 4. *A Summary of more particular Direc-ns is propoſed:* §. 5. (1.) *That the Sinner turn imſelf to Chriſt,* §. 6. *with deep Abhorrence of his rmer Sins,* §. 7. *and a firm Reſolution of forſaking em.* §. 8. (2.) *That he ſolemnly commit his Soul into e Hands of Chriſt, the great vital Act of Faith,* §. 9. *hich is exemplified at large.* §. 10. (3.) *That he ake it in Fact the governing Care of his future Life obey and imitate Chriſt.* §. 11. *This the only Me-od of obtaining Goſpel-Salvation.* §. 12. *The Sinner liberating on the Expediency of accepting it.*

I NOW conſider you, my dear Reader, as *coming to me with the Enquiry,* which *the Jews* addreſſed to *our Lord*; *What ſhall we do, that we work the Works of* GOD (a)? What *Method* ſhall I *to ſecure that Redemption and Salvation,* which I old *Chriſt has procured for his People?* I would *an-it* as ſeriouſly, and carefully as poſſible; as one that *s, of what Importance* it is *to you* to be *rightly in-d*; and that knows alſo, *how ſtrictly he is to an-to* GOD, for the Sincerity and Care with which Reply is made. May I be enabled to *ſpeak as his le* (b), that is, in ſuch a Manner, as faithfully to *ecchо* what *the ſacred Oracles* teach!

(a) John vi. 28. (b) 1 Pet. iv. 11.

§. 2. AND here, that I may be sure to follow the *safest Guides*, and *the fairest Examples*, I must [illegible] *Salvation to you*, in the Way of *Repentance toward* GOD, and of *Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ* (c): That [illegible] *Doctrine*, which the *Apostles preached*, and which [illegible] *Man* can pretend to *change*, but at the Peril of his [illegible] Soul, and of theirs who attend to him.

§. 3. I suppose, that you are, by this Time, *convinced* of *your Guilt and Condemnation*, and of *your own Inability* to recover yourselves. Let me nevertheless urge you to *feel that Conviction* yet more deeply, and to *impress* it with yet greater Weight *upon your Soul*; that you may *undone yourself*, and that *in yourself is not your Help found* (d). Be persuaded therefore, expressly, and solemnly, and sincerely to *give up all Self-Dependance*; which, if you do *not guard against it*, will be ready to *return secretly*, before it is observed, and will lead you to *attempt build up* what you have *just been destroying*.

§. 4. BE assured, that *if ever you are saved*, you must *ascribe that Salvation* entirely *to the Free Grace of* GOD. If, *guilty* and *miserable* as you are, you are not only *accepted*, but *crowned*, you must *lay down your Crowns* in all humble Acknowledgment *before the Throne* (e). *Flesh* must *glory in his Presence*; *but he that glorieth, must glory in the Lord: For of him are we in Christ Jesus, who of* GOD *is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness and Sanctification, and Redemption* (f). And you must be sensible, you are *in such a State*, as, having *none of these* in yourselves, *to need them in another*. You must therefore be sensible, that you are *ignorant* and *guilty*, *polluted* and *inslaved*; or, as *our Lord* expresses it, with regard to some who were under *a Christian Profession*, that as sinners, *you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked* (g).

§. 5. IF these Views be *deeply impressed* upon your Mind, you will be *prepared to receive* what I am about to say. Hear therefore in a few Words *your Duty*, *Remedy*, and *your Safety*; which consists in *this*, "that "you must *turn to Christ*, with *a deep Abhorrence* "of your former Sins, and *a firm Resolution* of for-

"the

(c) Acts xx. 21. (d) Hos. xiii. 9. (e) Rev. iv.
(f) 1 Cor. i. 29. 30, 31. (g) Rev. iii. 17.

them: *forming that Resolution* in the Strength of *His Grace*, and *fixing your Dependance on Him* for your *Acceptance with* GOD, even while you are purposing *to do your very best*, and when you have actually *done the best* you ever will do in Consequence of that Purpose."

§. 6. THE *first* and most important *Advice* that I give you in present Circumstances, is, *that you turn yourself to Christ*. And here, *say not in your Heart, who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring him down to* (h)? or who shall *raise me up thither* to present me before Him? The blessed *Jesus, by whom all Things con-* (i), by whom the whole System of them is supported, *forgotten as he is* by most that bear his Name, *is not far from any of us* (k): Nor could he have *promised* have been, *where-ever Two or Three are met together his Name* (l), but in Consequence of those *truly Divine erfections* by which he is *every where present*. Would u therefore, Oh Sinner, *desire to be saved?* Go to *the viour*. Would you *desire to be delivered?* Look to *at great Deliverer*: And tho' you should be *so over-helmed* with *Guilt*, and *Shame*, and *Fear*, and *Horror*, t you should be *incapable of speaking* to him, *fall wn* in this speechless Confusion *at his Feet*; and *behold* n, as *the Lamb of* GOD, *that taketh away the Sin the World* (m).

§. 7. BEHOLD him therefore with an attentive Eye, l say, Whether *the Sight* does not *touch*, and even *melt* very *Heart!* Dost thou not *feel*, what *a foolish*, and at *a wretched Creature* thou hast been; that for the ke of such *low* and *sordid Gratifications* and *Interests*, those which thou hast been pursuing, thou shouldst s *kill the Prince of Life* (n)? Behold *the deep Wounds*, ich he bore for thee. *Look on him whom thou hast rced, and* surely thou must *mourn* (o), unless *thine art* be hardened into *Stone*. Which of *thy past Sins* st thou reflect upon, and say, "*For this* it was *worth my while*, thus to have *injured my Saviour*, and to have *exposed the Son of* GOD to such Sufferings?" d what *future Temptations* can arise *so considerable*, that

(h) Rom. x. 6. (i) Col. i. 17. (k) Acts xvii. 27.
(l) Matt. xviii. 20. (m) John i. 29. (n) Acts iii. 15.
(o) Zech. xii. 10.

that thou shouldst say, " For the Sake of *this*, I will " *crucify my Lord again* (p) ?" Sinner, *thou must repent*; thou must repent *of every Sin*; and must *forsake it*: but if thou doest it *to any Purpose*, I well know it must be at *the Foot of the Cross*. Thou must *sacrifice every Lust*, even *the dearest*; tho' it should be like *a Right Hand*, or *a Right Eye* (q): And therefore that thou mayest, if possible, be *animated to it*, I have led thee *to that Altar*, on which *Christ himself* was *sacrificed for thee*, an Offering *of a sweet-smelling Savour* (r). Thou must *yield thyself to* GOD, *as one alive from the Dead* (s); and therefore I have shewed thee *at what a Price he purchased thee*: For *thou wast not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of the Son of* GOD, *that Lamb without Blemish and without Spot* (t). And now I would *ask thee as before the Lord*, What does *thine own Heart* say to it? Art thou *grieved for thy former Offences?* Art thou *willing to forsake thy Sins?* Art thou *willing to become* the thankful, chearful *Servant of him*, who hath *purchased thee with his own Blood?*

§. 8. I WILL suppose *such a Purpose as this* rising in thine Heart. How *determinate* it is, and how *effectual* it may be, *I know not*: What *different Views* may arise hereafter, or how soon *the present Sense* may wear off. But this *I assuredly know*, that thou wilt *never see Reason* to *change these Views*; for however *thou mayst alter*, the Lord *Jesus Christ is the same Yesterday, To-day, and for Ever* (u). And *the Reasons*, that now recommend *Repentance* as fit and as necessary, will *continue invariable*, as long as *the Perfections* of the Blessed GOD are *the same*, and as long as *his Son* continues *the same*.

§. 9. BUT while you have *these Views* and *these Purposes*, I must remind you, that *this is not all* which is *necessary to your Salvation*. You must *not only purpose*, but, as GOD gives Opportunity, you must *act*, as those who are *convinced* of the *Evil of Sin*, and of the *Necessity* and *Excellence of Holiness*. And that you may be *enabled to do so* in other Instances, you must *in the first Place*, and as the first great *Work of* GOD, (as our Lord

(p) Heb. vi. 6. (q) Matt. v. 29, 30. (r) Eph. v. 2.
(s) Rom. vi. 13. (t) 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. (u) Heb. xiii. 8.

rd himself calls it,) *believe in him whom* GOD *hath t* (x): You must *confide in him*; must *commit your ul* into the Hands of *Christ*, to be *saved by him* in his *n appointed Method of Salvation*. This is *the great t of saving Faith*; and I pray GOD, that you may *perimentally know* what it means; so as to be able to , with the *Apostle Paul*, in the near Views of Death elf, *I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded at he is able to keep that which I have committed to until that Day* (y); that great decisive *Day*, which, we are *Christians*, we have *always in View*. To this would *urge you*; and Oh that I could be *so happy as to gage you to it*, while I am illustrating it in this, and e following Addresses! Be assured, *you must not apply rselves immediately to* GOD, as absolutely or in him- f considered, *in the Neglect of a Mediator*. It will ither be *acceptable to him*, nor *safe for you*, to rush into s Presence, *without any Regard to his own Son*, whom hath appointed *to introduce Sinners to him*. And if *come otherwise*, you come as one *who is not a Sinner*. he very *Manner of presenting the Address* will be inter- eted *as a Denial of that Guilt*, with which he knows *art chargeable*: And therefore *he will not admit you*, so much as *look upon you*. And accordingly, *our rd*, knowing how much *every Man living* was con- rned *in this*, says in the most universal Terms; *No an cometh unto the Father but by me* (z).

§. 10. APPLY therefore to *this glorious Redeemer*, *iable* (as he will appear to every believing Eye) *in the od* which he shed *upon the Cross*, and in *the Wounds* ich he received there. *Go to him*, Oh Sinner, *this y, this Moment*, with *all thy Sins about thee*. Go *as thou art*; for if thou wilt *never apply to him*, till ou art *first righteous and holy*, thou wilt *never be righ- us and holy* at all; nor *canst be so* on this Supposition, less there were *some Way of being so without him*; and en, there would be *no Occasion for applying to him* for *ghteousness* and *Holiness*. It were indeed as if it should said, that *a sick Man* should *defer his Application* to a *ysician*, till his Health be recovered. Let me therefore eat it without Offence, *Go to him just as thou art*, and say,

(x) John vi. 29. (y) 2 Tim. i. 12. (z) John xiv. 6.

say, (Oh that thou mayest *this Moment* be *enabled* to *say it* from thy very Soul!) "*Blessed Jesus*, I am surely "*one of the most sinful*, and *one of the most miserable* "*Creatures*, that ever *fell prostrate* before thee: Nevertheless *I come*, because I have heard that Thou "didst once say, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and* "*are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest* (a). I am "*come*, because I have heard, Thou didst graciously say, "*Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast* "*out* (b). Oh thou *Prince of Peace*, Oh thou *King of* "*Glory*, I am *a condemned miserable Sinner*. I have "*ruined my own Soul*, and I am *condemned for ever*, "if Thou dost not *help me*, and *save me*. I have *broken* "*thy Father's Law*, and *thine*, for Thou art *one with* "*him* (c). I have *deserved Condemnation* and *Wrath*; "and I am, even at this very Moment, *under a Sen-* "*tence* of *everlasting Destruction*: A Destruction, which "will be *aggravated* by *all the Contempt* which I have "cast upon Thee, Oh thou *bleeding Lamb of* GOD. "For I cannot, and will not dissemble it before thee, "that I have *wronged Thee*, most basely and ungrate- "fully *wronged Thee*, under the Character of *a Saviour* "as well as of *a Lord*. But now, I am willing to *sub-* "*mit to Thee*; and I have brought *my poor trembling* "*Soul*, to *lodge it in Thine Hands*, if Thou wilt con- "descend to *receive it*; and if Thou *dost not*, it must "*perish*. Oh Lord, I *lie at thy Feet*: Stretch out thy "*golden Sceptre, that I may live* (d)! Yea, *if it please* "*the King, let the Life of my Soul be given me at my* "*Petition* (e)! I have *no Treasure*, wherewith to pur- "chase it: I have *no Equivalent* to give thee for it. "But if *that compassionate Heart of thine* can find "*Pleasure* in saving *one of the most distressed Creatures* "under Heaven, *that Pleasure* thou mayst *here* find. "Oh Lord, I have *foolishly attempted* to be *mine own* "*Saviour*; but it *will not do*. I am sensible *the At-* "*tempt* is *vain*; and therefore I *give it over*, and *yield* "*myself to Thee*. On Thee, *blessed Jesus*, as the *ever-* "*lasting Rock*, do I desire to *fix my Anchor*. On Thee "as the *only sure Foundation*, would I *build my eter-*

"*Hope*

(a) Matt. xi. 28. (b) John vi. 37. (c) John x. 30.
(d) Esth. iv. 11. (e) Esth. vii. 3.

Hopes. To *thy Teaching*, Oh Thou unerring *Prophet of the Lord*, would I *submit*: Be *thy Doctrines* ever so *mysterious*, it is *enough for me*, that *Thou* thyself *hast said it.* To *thine Atonement*, *Obedience*, and *Intercession*, Oh Thou holy and ever-acceptable *High-Priest*, would I *trust*. And to *thy Government*, Oh Thou exalted *Sovereign*, would I *yield* a willing, delightful *Subjection*. In Token of Reverence and Love, I *kiss the Son* (f); I kiss *the Ground* before his Feet. I *admit thee*, Oh my *Saviour*, and *welcome thee* with unutterable Joy, *to the Throne in my Heart*. Ascend it, and *reign there* for ever! *Subdue mine Enemies*, Oh Lord, for *they are thine*; and *make me* thy faithful, thy zealous *Servant*; *faithful to Death*, and *zealous to Eternity!*"

§. 11. SUCH as *this* must be *the Language* of *your Heart* before the Lord. But then remember, it must *be the Language* of *your Life* too. The unmeaning *words of the Lips* would be *a vain Mockery*. The most affectionate *Transport of the Passions*, should it be *transient* and *ineffectual*, would be but like *a Blaze of Straw*, presented instead of *Incense* at his Altar. With such *Humility*, with such *Love*, with such cordial *Self-Dedication* and *Submission of Soul*, must thou often *prostrate thyself*, in the Presence of *Christ*; and then thou must *go away*, and *keep him in thy View*; must *go away*, *live unto* GOD thro' him, *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, and behaving thyself *soberly, righteously, and godly, in this* vain insnaring *World* (g). You must make it *your Care*, to *shew your Love* by *Obedience*; *conforming yourself* as much as possible, *according to the Temper* and *Manner of Jesus*, in whom you believe. You must make it *the great Point of your Ambition*, (and a *nobler View* you cannot entertain,) to be *a living Image of Christ*; that so far as Circumstances will allow, *even they* who have *heard* and *read* but *little of him*, may, *observing you*, in some Measure *see* and *know* what *kind of a Life* that of *the Blessed Jesus* was. And this must be your *constant Care*, your *prevailing Character*, during as you live. You must *follow him*, whithersoever he leads you; must *follow*, with *a Cross* on your Shoulder, when he commands you to *take it up* (h); and so

(f) Psal. ii. 12. (g) Tit. ii. 12. (h) Matt. xvi. 24.

so must *be faithful* even *to the Death*, expecting *the Crown of Life* (i).

§. 12. THIS, so far as I have been able to learn from the Word of GOD, is *the Way to Safety* and *Glory*; the surest, *the only Way* you can take. 'Tis *the Way*, which every *faithful Minister of Christ* has *trod*, and *is treading*: and *the Way*, to which, as he tenders *the Salvation of his own Soul*, he must *direct others*. We cannot, we would not *alter it*, in Favour of *ourselves*, or of our *dearest Friends*. It is *the Way*, in which *alone*, (so far as we can judge, it *becomes the Blessed GOD* to save *Apostate Creatures*. And therefore, Reader, I beseech and intreat you *seriously to consider it*; and let *your Conscience answer*, as in the Presence of GOD, whether you are *willing to acquiesce in it*, or *not*. For know, that *to reject it* is *thine Eternal Death*. For *there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we can be saved* (k), but this of *Jesus of Nazareth*, so there is *no other Method* but this, in which *Jesus himself* will *save us*.

The Sinner deliberating *on the Expediency of falling in with this Method of Salvation.*

"CONSIDER, Oh my Soul, *what thou*
"wilt thou *return* to such *Proposals* as these?
"Surely, if I were to speak *the first Dictates* of my
"*corrupt* and *degenerate Heart*, it would be, *This is a*
"*hard Saying, and who can bear it* (l)? To be
"*humbled*, thus *mortified*, thus *subjected*! To take
"*a Yoke* upon me, and to *carry it* as long as I live!
"*give up* every *darling Lust*, tho' *dear to me* as a
"*Eye*, and seemingly *necessary* as *a Right Hand*!
"*submit*, not only *my Life*, but *my Heart*, to the Com-
"mand and Discipline of *another*! To have a Master
"*there*, and *such a Master*, as will *controul* many of
"*favourite Affections*, and direct them quite into a new
"Channel! *A Master*, who himself represents his
"Commands, by *taking up the Cross and following me*!
"To adhere to *the strictest Rules* of *Godliness* and
"*briety*, of *Righteousness* and *Truth*; *not hypo-*

(i) Rev. ii. 10. (k) Acts iv. 12. (l) John vi.

from them, in any *allowed Instance*, great or small, upon any *Temptation*, for any *Advantage*, to escape any *Inconvenience* and *Evil*, no, not even for *the Preservation of Life itself*; but upon a proper Call of Providence, *to act* as if I *hated even my own Life* (m)! Lord, it is *hard to Flesh and Blood*: And yet I *perceive* and *feel*, there is *one Demand* yet *harder than this*.

" With all these *Precautions*, with all these *Mortifications*, the *Pride of my Nature* would find some inward *Recourse of Pleasure*, might I but secretly think, that *I had been my own Saviour*; that *my own Wisdom*, and *my own Resolution*, had *broken the Bands* and *Chains* of the Enemy; and that I had *drawn out of my own Treasures*, the *Price* with which *my Redemption* was *purchased*. But must I *lie down before another*, as *guilty* and *condemned*, as *weak* and *helpless*? And must *the Obligation* be *multiplied*, and must *a Mediator* have *His Share* too? Must I *go to the Cross* for my Salvation, and *seek my Glory* from the *Infamy of that*? Must I be *stript of* every pleasing *Pretence to Righteousness*, and *stand* in this Respect *upon a Level* with the *vilest* of Men? *stand at the Bar* among the greatest Criminals, *pleading guilty* with them, and *seeking Deliverance* by *that very Act of Grace*, whereby *they* have obtained it?

" I dare not deliberately say, *This Method is unreasonable*. My Conscience testifies, that *I have sinned*, and *cannot be justified* before GOD, *as an innocent*, and *obedient Creature*. My Conscience tells me, that *all these humbling Circumstances* are *fit*: That it is fit, *a convicted Criminal* should be *brought upon his Knees*: That *a captive Rebel* should *give up the Weapons* of his Rebellion, and *bow before his Sovereign*, if he respect his Life. Yea, *my Reason*, as well as *my Conscience*, tells me, that it is *fit* and *necessary*, that if I am *saved at all*, I should be *saved from the Power* and *Love of Sin*, as well as from *the Condemnation of it*; and that if *Sovereign Mercy* gives me *New Life*, after having *deserved Eternal Death*, 'tis *most fit*, I should *yield myself to* GOD, *as*

(m) Luke xiv. 26.

" *alive from the Dead* (n). But, *Oh wretched Man*
" *I am, I feel a Law in my Members, that*
" *against the Law of my Mind* (o), and oppos
" Conviction of my Reason and Conscience. *Wh*
" *deliver me* from this Bondage? Who shall
" *willing* to *do that*, which I know in my own
" to be *most expedient?* Oh Lord, *subdue my*
" and let it not be *drawn so strongly one Way*,
" the nobler Powers of *my Mind* would *direct it*
" Conquer *every licentious Principle within*, that
" be *my Joy* to be *so wisely governed*, and *re*
" Especially, subdue *my Pride*, that *Lordly Corr*
" which *so ill suits* an *impoverished* and a
" *Creature*; that *Thy Way of Salvation* may be
" *to me*, in Proportion to the Degree in which
" *humbling!* I feel a Disposition to *linger in*
" but *Oh be merciful to me*, and *pull me out of it*
" fore the Storms of *Thy flaming Vengeance*
" there be *no more Escaping!*"

(n) Rom. vi. 13. (o) Rom. vii. 23, 24. (p) Gen.

CH

CHAP. X.

e Sinner ſeriouſly urged and intreated to accept of Salvation in this Way.

many who have been impreſſed with theſe Things, ffer the Impreſſion to wear off in vain, §. 1. Strongly the Caſe ſpeaks for itſelf, Sinners are to be intreat- to accept this Salvation. §. 2. Accordingly the ader is intreated, (1.) By the Majeſty and Mercy GOD: §. 3. (2.) By the dying Love of our Lord eſus Chriſt: §. 4. (3.) By the Regard due to Fellow- reatures: §. 5. (4.) By the Worth of his own Im- rtal Soul. §. 6. The Matter is ſolemnly left with Readr, as before GOD. §. 7. The Sinner yielding theſe Intreaties, and declaring his Acceptance of lvation by Chriſt.

THUS far have I often known *Convictions* and *Impreſſions* to ariſe, (if I might judge by the geſt Appearances,) which after all have *worn off*. Some unhappy Circumſtance of *external Temp-*, ever join'd by the *inward Reluctance* of an *un-ified* Heart to this holy and humbling *Scheme of Re-ion*, has been *the Ruin of Multitudes*. And *through Deceitfulneſs of Sin*, they have *been hardned* (a), till ſeem to have been *utterly deſtroyed, and that with-emedy* (b). And therefore, Oh thou *immortal Crea-* who art now reading theſe Lines, *I beſeech thee*, while *Affairs* are in this *critical Situation*, while are theſe *Balancings of Mind* between *accepting* and *ing* that *glorious Goſpel*, which, in the Integrity of Heart, I have now been laying before you, you would

(a) Heb. iii. 13. (b) Prov. xxix. 1.

would *once more* give me an *attentive Audience*, while I *plead*, in *GOD's Behalf*, (ſhall I ſay?) or rather in your *own*; while *as an Embaſſador for Chriſt, and as though GOD did beſeech you by me, I pray you in Chriſt's Stead*, that you would *be reconciled to GOD* (c); and would not, after theſe *Awakenings* and theſe *Enquiries*, by a *Madneſs* which it will ſurely be the doleful Buſineſs of a miſerable Eternity to lament, *reject this* compaſſionate *Counſel of GOD towards you*.

§. 2. ONE would indeed imagine, there ſhould be no *Need of Importunity* here. One would conclude, that as ſoon as *periſhing Sinners* are told, that *an offended GOD* is *ready to be reconciled*; that he *offers them a full Pardon* for all their aggravated Sins; yea, that he is willing *to adopt them* into his Family *now*, that he may *at laſt admit them* to his Heavenly Preſence, *all ſhould* with the utmoſt Readineſs and Pleaſure *embrace ſo kind a Meſſage*, and *fall at his Feet* in ſpeechleſs *Tranſports* of *Aſtoniſhment*, *Gratitude*, and *Joy*. But alas, we find it *much otherwiſe*. We ſee *Multitudes quite unmoved*, and their *Impreſſions* which are *made on many more* are *ſlight* and *tranſient*. Leſt it ſhould be *thus with you*, Oh Reader, let me *urge the Meſſage* with which I have the Honour to be *charged*: Let me *intreat you to be reconciled to GOD*, and to *accept of Pardon* and *Salvation* in the Way in which it is *ſo freely offered* to you.

§. 3. I INTREAT you, "by the *Majeſty of that GOD* "in whoſe Name I come;" whoſe Voice *fills all Heaven* with Reverence and Obedience. He *ſpeaks not in vain* to *Legions of Angels*; but if there could be any *Contention* among thoſe *bleſſed Spirits*, it would be, who *ſhould be firſt* to execute his Commands. Oh let him not *ſpeak in vain* to a *wretched Mortal!* I intreat you, "by "the *Terrors of His Wrath*," who could *ſpeak to you in Thunder*; who could, by one ſilent Act of his Will, *cut off this precarious Life* of yours, and *ſend you down to Hell*. I beſeech you "by *His Mercies*, by His "*dear Mercies*;" by the *Bowels of His Compaſſion*, which ſtill *yearn over you*; as thoſe of *a Parent over a dear Son*, over *a tender Child*, whom, notwithſtanding his former ungrateful Rebellions, *he earneſtly remembers*

(c) 2 Cor. v. 20.

ill (d). I beſeech and intreat you, "by all this *pater-*
nal Goodneſs," that you do not (as it were) *compel*
im to loſe the Character of *the gentle Parent*, in that
the righteous Judge; ſo that, *as He threatens* with
egard to thoſe whom He had juſt called *his Sons and*
Daughters, a Fire ſhould be kindled in his Anger,
hich ſhould burn unto the loweſt Hell (e).

§. 4. I BESEECH you farther, "by the *Name* and
Love of our *dying Saviour*." I beſeech you, by *all the*
ndeſcenſion of *His Incarnation*; by that *Poverty*, to
ich He voluntarily ſubmitted, *that you might be in-*
hed with Eternal Treaſures (f); by *all the gracious*
vitations which he gave, which ſtill *ſound in his*
rd, and ſtill *coming*, as it were, *warm from his*
art, are *ſweeter than Honey, or the Honey-Comb* (g).
eſeech you, by *all his glorious Works* of *Power* and
Wonder, which were alſo *Works of Love*. I beſeech
, by *the Memory* of the *moſt benevolent Perſon*, and
moſt generous Friend. I beſeech you, by *the Memory*
what he ſuffered, as well as of *what he ſaid* and
; by *the Agony* which he bore *in the Garden*, when
Body was covered *with a Dew of Blood* (h). I be-
h you, by *all that tender Diſtreſs* which he felt,
n *his deareſt Friends forſook him and fled* (i), and his
nd-thirſty Enemies dragged him away, like the *meaneſt*
Slaves, and like the *vileſt of Criminals*. I beſeech
, by *the Blows* and *Bruiſes*, by *the Stripes* and *Laſhes*,
ch this *injured Sovereign endured* while in their re-
ious Hands; by *the Shame of Spitting*, from which
id not that kind and venerable *Countenance* (k). I
ech you, by *the Purple Robe*, *the Sceptre of Reed*,
the Crown of Thorns, which this *King of Glory*
e, that he might *ſet us among the Princes* of Hea-
(l). I beſeech you, by *the heavy Burthen of the*
s, under which *he panted*, and *toiled*, and *fainted*,
he painful Way to *Golgotha* (m), that he might *free*
rom the Burthen of our Sins. I beſeech you, by *the*
embrance of thoſe rude *Nails*, that tore the Veins
Arteries, the Nerves and Tendons of his Sacred

Jer. xxxi. 20. (e) Deut. xxxii. 19, 22. (f) 2 Cor. viii. 9.
ſal. xix. 10. (h) Luke xxii. 44. (i) Mat. xxvi. 56.
ſai. l. 6. (l) Pſal. cxiii. 8. (m) John xix. 17.

Hands and Feet; and by that *invincible*, that *triumphant Goodness*, which while *the Iron pierced his Flesh*, engaged him to cry out, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (n). I beseech you, by *the unutterable Anguish* which he bore, when *lifted up upon the Cross*, and extended there *as on a Rack*, for *Six painful Hours*, that you *open your Heart* to those attractive *Influences*, which have *drawn to him* Thousands and Ten Thousands (o). I beseech you, by *all that Insult and Derision*, which the *Lord of Glory* bore there (p); by that *parching Thirst*, which could hardly obtain the Relief of *Vinegar* (q); by that *doleful Cry*, so astonishing in the Mouth of *the only Begotten* of the Father, *My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me* (r)? I beseech you, by *the Grace* that subdued and pardoned *a dying Malefactor* (s); by that *Compassion for Sinners*, by that *Compassion for you*, which *wrought in his Heart* long as its vital Motion continued, and which *ended* when *he bowed his Head*, saying, *It is finished*, and *gave up the Ghost* (t). I beseech you, by *the Triumph* of that *Resurrection*, by which he was *declared to be the Son of GOD with Power, by the Spirit of Holiness* which wrought to accomplish it (u); by that *gracious Tenderness* which attempered all those Triumphs, when he said to *her out of whom he had cast Seven Devils* concerning *his Disciples* who had treated him so basely, *Go, tell my Brethren, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my GOD and your GOD* (x). I beseech you, by that *Condescension*, with which he said to *Thomas* when *his Unbelief* had made such an unreasonable Demand, *Reach hither thy Finger, and behold my Hands, and reach hither thine Hand, and put it to my Side, and be not faithless, but believing* (y). I beseech you by that *generous* and *faithful Care of his People*, which he *carried up with him* to the Regions of Glory, and which engaged him to *send down his Spirit*, in that rich Profusion of *miraculous Gifts*, to spread the Progress of *his saving Word* (z). I beseech you, by that *Vain*

Sym-

(n) Luke xxiii. 34. (o) John xii. 32. (p) Mat. xxvii. 39.
(q) John xix. 28, 29. (r) Mat. xxvii. 46. (s) Luke xxiii. 42.
(t) John xix. 30. (u) Rom. i. 4. (x) John xx.
(y) John xx. 27. (z) Acts ii. 33.

pathy and *Power*, with which he *said to Saul*, while ring his Church, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou* (a)? by that *generous Goodneſs*, which ſpared that *ſtrate Enemy*, when he lay *trembling at his Feet*, and ed him to ſo high a Dignity as to be *not inferior to very chiefeſt Apoſtles* (b). I beſeech you, by *the Me-* of all *he hath already done*, by *the Expectation* of *he will farther do* for his People. I beſeech you, at e, by *the Sceptre of his Grace*, and by that *Sword his Juſtice*, with which all his incorrigible *Enemies* ll be *ſlain before him* (c), that you do not *triſle* ay theſe precious Moments, while *his Spirit* is thus *ating upon you*; that you do not *loſe an Opportunity* ich may *never return*, and on the Improvement of ich *your Eternity* depends.

. 5. I BESEECH you, "by all the *Bowels of Com-aſſion* which you owe to the *faithful Miniſters of Chriſt*;" who are ſtudying and labouring, preaching praying, wearing out their Time, exhauſting their ength, and, very probably, ſhortening their Lives, *for Salvation* of your Soul, and of Souls like yours. I eech you, by *the Affection*, with which *all that love Lord Jeſus Chriſt in Sincerity*, long to ſee you *brought k to him*. I beſeech you, by *the Friendſhip of the ing*, and by *the Memory of the Dead*; by *the Ruin thoſe* who have *triſled away their Days*, and are *ſted in their Sins*, and by *the Happineſs of thoſe* who e *embraced the Goſpel*, and are *ſaved by it*. I be-h you, by *the great Expectation* of that *important , when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Hea-* (d); by *the Terrors* of a *diſſolving World* (e); by *Sound* of the *Arch-Angel's Trumpet* (f), and of that *nitely more awful Sentence, Come, ye Bleſſed*, and *art, ye Curſed*, with which *that Grand Solemnity* ll cloſe (g).

. 6. I BESEECH you finally, "by *your own precious immortal Soul*;" by *the ſure Proſpect* of a *dying* , or of a *ſudden Surprize* into the *Inviſible State*; as you would feel *one Sparkle of Comfort*, in your departing

) Acts ix. 4. (b) 2 Cor. xii. 11. (c) Luke xix. 27.
2 Theſſ. i. 7. (e) 2 Pet. iii. 10. (f) 1 Theſſ. iv. 16.
Mat. xxv. 34, 41.

departing Spirit, when *your Flesh and your Heart* are *failing*. I beseech you, by *your own Personal Appearance* before *the Tribunal of Christ*, (for *a Personal Appearance* it must be, even *to them* who now sit *on Thrones of their own*;) by all *the Transports of the Blessed*, and by all *the Agonies of the Damned*, the *one* or the *other* of which must be *your everlasting Portion*. I affectionately intreat and beseech you, *in the Strength of all these united Considerations*, as you will *answer it to me*, who may in that Day be summoned to *testify against you*; and, which is unspeakably more, as you will *answer it to your own Conscience*, as you will *answer it to the Eternal Judge*; that you *dismiss not* these Thoughts, these Meditations, and these Cares, till you have *brought Matters to a happy Issue*; till you have made a *Resolute Choice of Christ*, and his appointed *Way of Salvation*, and till you have *solemnly devoted yourself* to GOD in *the Bonds of an Everlasting Covenant*.

§. 7. AND thus *I leave the Matter* before *you*, and before *the Lord*. I have told you *my Errand*: I have discharged *my Embassy*. *Stronger Arguments* I cannot use; *more endearing* and *more awful Considerations* I cannot suggest. *Chuse therefore*, whether you will *go out* (as it were) *clothed in Sackcloth*, to cast yourself *at the Feet of him* who now sends you *these Terms of Peace* and *Pardon*; or, whether you will *hold it out*, till he appear *Sword in Hand*, to reckon with you for *your Treasons* and *your Crimes*, and for *this neglected Embassy* among the rest of them. Fain would I *hope the best*; not only I believe, that *this Labour of Love* shall be *so entirely unsuccessful*, that *not one Soul* shall be *brought to the Feet of Christ*, in cordial Submission and humble Faith. *Take with you* therefore *Words, and turn unto the Lord* (h); and Oh that *those which follow* might, in Effect at least, be *the genuine Language* of every one that reads them!

The Sinner yielding *to these Intreaties, and declaring his Acceptance of Salvation by* Christ.

"BLESSED Lord, *It is enough!* It is *too much!* Surely there *needs not* this *Variety of Arguments*,

(h) Hos. xiv. 2.

this *Importunity of Perſuaſion*, to court me *to be happy*, to prevail upon me *to accept of Pardon, of Life, of Eternal Glory*. Compaſſionate Saviour, *my Soul is ſubdued*; ſo that I truſt, *the Language of Thy Grief is become that of my Penitence*, and I may ſay, *My Heart is melted like Wax in the Midſt of my Bowels* (i).

"Oh *gracious Redeemer!* I have already *neglected Thee too long*. I have *too often injured Thee*; have *crucified Thee afreſh* by my *Guilt* and *Impenitence*, as if I had taken Pleaſure in *putting Thee to an open Shame* (k). But *my Heart* now *bows itſelf before Thee*, in humble unfeigned Submiſſion. I deſire to make *no Terms with Thee* but theſe, — *that I may be entirely Thine*. I chearfully *preſent Thee with a Blank*, intreating Thee, that Thou wilt do me the Honour to *ſignify upon it*, what is Thy Pleaſure. *Teach me*, Oh Lord, *what Thou wouldſt have me to do!* For I deſire to *learn the Leſſon*, and to learn it *that I may practiſe it*. If it be *more than my feeble Powers can anſwer*, Thou wilt, I hope, *give me more Strength*; and *in that Strength* I will ſerve Thee. Oh *receive a Soul*, which Thou haſt made *willing to be Thine!*

"*No more*, Oh bleſſed *Jeſus*, *no more is it neceſſary* to *beſeech* and *intreat me*. Permit me rather *to addreſs myſelf to Thee*, with all *the Importunity* of *a periſhing Sinner*, that, at length, ſees and knows, *there is Salvation in no other* (l)! Permit me *now*, Lord, to come, and *throw myſelf at Thy Feet*, like *a helpleſs Outcaſt*, that has no *Shelter* but in *Thy generous Compaſſion!* like one *purſued by the Avenger of Blood*, and ſeeking earneſtly an Admittance *into the City of Refuge* (m)!

"*I wait for the Lord, my Soul doth wait; and in Thy Word do I hope* (n), that Thou wilt *receive me graciouſly* (o). My Soul *confides in Thy Goodneſs*, and *adores it*. I adore *the Patience*, which has *borne with me ſo long*; and *the Grace*, that *now makes me* heartily *willing to be Thine*; to be Thine *on Thine*

" *own*

(i) Pſal. xxii. 14. (k) Heb. vi. 6. (l) Acts iv. 12.
Joſh. xx. 2, 3. (n) Pſal. cxxx. 5. (o) Hoſ. xiv. 2.

" *own Terms*, Thine *on any Terms*. Oh secure my
" *treacherous Heart to* Thyſelf! Oh *unite me to Thee*
" in ſuch *inſeparable Bonds*, that none of *the Allure-*
" *ments of Fleſh and Blood*, none of *the Vanities of a*
" *inſnaring World*, none of *the Solicitations of ſinful*
" *Companions*, may *draw me back* from Thee, and
" plunge me *into new Guilt* and *Ruin! Be Surety*, O
" Lord, *for thy Servant for Good* (p); that I may
" ſtill *keep my Hold on Thee*, and ſo *on Eternal Life*; that
" at length *I know more fully*, by joyful and everlaſting
" Experience, *how compleat a Saviour* Thou art!
" *Amen*."

(p) Pſal. cxix. 122.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

A Solemn Addreſs to thoſe, who will not be perſuaded to fall in with the Deſign of the Goſpel.

Iniverſal Succeſs not to be expected: §. 1. *Yet, as unwilling abſolutely to give up any, the Author addreſſes,* (1.) *To thoſe who doubt of the Truth of Chriſtianity, urging an Enquiry into its Evidences, and directing to proper Methods for that Purpoſe.* §. 2,—4. (2.) *To thoſe who determine to give it up without further Examination,* §. 5. *and preſume to ſet themſelves to oppoſe it.* §. 6. (3.) *To thoſe who ſpeculatively aſſent to Chriſtianity as true, and yet will ſit down without any practical Regard to its moſt important and acknowledged Truths. Such are diſmiſſed with a Repreſentation of the Abſurdity of their Conduct on their own Principles;* §. 7, 8. *with a ſolemn Warning of its fatal Conſequences;* §. 9, 10. *and a compaſſionate Prayer, (introduced,* §. 11.) *which concludes the Chapter, and this Part of the Work.*

1. I WOULD humbly *hope*, that the *preceding Chapters* will be *the Means* of awakening ſome ſtupid nd inſenſible Sinners, the Means of *convincing them* of eir Need of *Goſpel-Salvation*, and of *engaging ſome* rdially to accept it. Yet, I cannot flatter myſelf far, as to hope *this* ſhould be *the Caſe* with regard *all*, into whoſe Hands this Book ſhall come. What *I*, alas, *better than my Fathers* (a), or better than *Brethren*, who have in all Ages been repeating *their* mplaint, with regard to Multitudes, that they *have ſtretched*

(a) 1 Kings xix. 4.

stretched out their Hands all the Day long to a disbel[ieving] and gainsaying People (b)? Many such may, perhaps, be found, in the Number of my Readers: *Many*, to whom, neither Considerations of *Terror*, nor of *Love* will make any deep and lasting Impression: *Many*, who as *our Lord* learnt by Experience to express it, *when we pipe to them, will not dance*, and *when we mourn to them, will not lament* (c). I can say *no more* to persuade them, if they *make light* of what I have already *said*. Here therefore *we must part*; in *this Chapter* I must *take my Leave* of them: And, Oh that I could do it *in such a Manner*, as to *fix* at parting *some Conviction* upon their Hearts; that tho' I seem to *leave them* for a little while, and *send them back* to review again the *former Chapters*, as those in which alone they have a *present Concern*, they might *soon*, as it were, *overtake me again*, and find *a Suitableness* in the *remaining Part* of this Discourse, which *at present* they *cannot* yet *find*. Unhappy Creatures! *I quit you*, as a Physician quits *a Patient* whom he loves, and is just about to give *over as incurable*: He *returns* again and again, and *examines* the several *Symptoms*, to observe whether there be not *some one of them* more favourable than the rest, which may *encourage a renewed Application*.

§. 2. So would I *once more return* to you. You do *not find* in yourself *any Disposition* to embrace the Gospel, to apply yourself to *Christ*, to give yourself up to the *Service of GOD*, and to make *Religion* the Business of your Life. But if I *cannot prevail* upon you *to do* this, let me *engage you*, at least, *to answer me*, or rather *answer your own Conscience*, Why you *will not do it*? Is it owing to *any secret Disbelief* of the great *Principles of Religion*? If it be, *the Case* is *different* from what I have yet considered, and *the Cure* must be *different*. This is not a Place to combat with *the Scruples of Infidelity*. Nevertheless I would desire you seriously to enquire how far *those Scruples* extend. Do they affect only *some particular Doctrines of the Gospel*, on which my Argument hath turned? or do they affect *the whole Christian Revelation*? Or do they reach *yet farther*, and extend themselves to *Natural Religion*, as well as *Revealed*?

(b) Rom. x. 21. (c) Mat. xi. 17.

hat it ſhould be *a Doubt with you*, Whether there be *any* OD, and *Providence*, and *Future State*, or not? As *eſe Caſes* are *all different*, ſo it will be of great Im-ortance *to diſtinguiſh* the one from the other; that you ay know, on *what Principles* to build as *certain*, in e Examination of *thoſe* concerning which you are *yet* Doubt. But whatever *theſe Doubts* are, I would *far-er* aſk you, *How long* have they *continued*, and *what ethod* have you taken *to get them reſolved?* Do you nagine, that *in Matters of ſuch Moment*, it will be *an llowable Caſe* for you *to trifle on*, neglecting *to enquire to the Evidence* of theſe Things, and then plead *your not ing ſatisfied in that Evidence*, as an Excuſe for *not act-g according to them?* Muſt not *the Principles of com-n Senſe* aſſure you, that *if theſe Things be true*, (as hen you talk of *doubting about them*, you acknowledge at leaſt, *poſſible they may*,) they are of *infinitely greater portance* than any of *the Affairs of Life*, whether of *ſineſs* or *Pleaſure*, for the Sake of which you neglect em? Why then do you *continue indolent and uncon-rned*, from Week to Week, and from Month to onth, *which* probably Conſcience tells you *is the ſe?*

§. 3. Do you aſk, *What Method* you ſhould take *to be lved?* It is *no hard Queſtion*. Open *your Eyes:* Set urſelf to *think:* Let *Conſcience* ſpeak; and verily do elieve, that if it be not *ſeared in an uncommon Degree*, u will find *ſhrewd Forebodings of the Certainty*, both of *tural* and *Revealed Religion*, and of the *abſolute Ne-ſity* of *Repentance*, *Faith* and *Holineſs*, to a Life of *fu-e Felicity*. If you are a Perſon of *any Learning*, you not but know, by *what Writers*, and in *what Trea-s*, theſe *great Truths* are defended. And if you *are* you may *find*, in every Town and Neighbourhood, *ſons capable* of *informing you* in the *main Evidences* Chriſtianity, and of *anſwering ſuch Scruples againſt it* nlearned Minds may have met with. *Set yourſelf* , in the Name of GOD, *immediately to conſider Matter*. If you *ſtudy at all*, bend *your Studies* cloſe *Way*, and *trifle not* with *Mathematicks*, or *Poetry*, or *ry*, or *Law*, or *Phyſick*, (which are all comparative-ight *as a Feather*,) while you *neglect this*. Study

the Argument, *as for your Life*; for *much more than Life* depends on it. See *how far* you are *satisfied*, and why *that Satisfaction* reaches *no farther*. Compare *Evidences on both Sides*. And above all, *consult the Genius* of the *New Testament*. See *to what* it would *lead you*, and all them that cordially obey it; and then say, *whether it be not good*. And consider, how naturally *its Truth* is connected with *its Goodness*. Trace *the Character* and *Sentiments* of *its Authors*, whose *living Image* (if I may be allowed the Expression,) *is still preserved in their Writings*. And then, *ask your own Heart*, Can you think *this* was *a Forgery*; an *impious*, *cruel Forgery*? For such it must have been, if it were *a Forgery* at all; a *Scheme* to *mock* GOD, and to *ruin Men*, even *the best of Men*, such as *reverenced Conscience*, and would *abide all Extremities* for what they apprehended to be *Truth*. Put the Question to your own Heart, Can I in my Conscience *believe it to be an Imposture*? Can I look up to *an Omniscient* GOD, and say, *Oh Lord, Thou knowest* that it is *in Reverence to Thee*, and *in Love to Truth and Virtue*, that I *reject this Book*, and the *Method to Happiness* here laid down?

§. 4. But there are *Difficulties in the Way*.—but what then? Have *those Difficulties* never been cleared? Go to the *living Advocates for Christianity*, to *those* whose *Abilities*, *Candor*, and *Piety*, you have *the best Opinion*; if *your Prejudices* will *give you Leave* to have *a good Opinion* of any such: Tell them *your Difficulties*. Hear *their Solutions*: Weigh them *seriously*, as those who know *they must answer it* to GOD: And while *Doubts* continue, *follow the Truth* as far as it will lead you, but *take Heed* that you do not *imprison it in Unrighteousness* (d). Nothing appears *more inconsistent* and *absurd* than for a Man solemnly to pretend *Dissatisfaction* with the *Evidences of the Gospel*, as a Reason *why he cannot* in Conscience *be a thorough Christian*; when yet at the same Time *he violates* the most apparent *Dictates of Reason and Conscience*, and *lives in Vices* condemned even by *the Heathens*. Oh Sirs, *Christ* has *judged concerning such*, and judged most righteously and most wisely: *Men do Evil*, and therefore *they hate the Light*, neither

(d) Rom. i. 18.

ey to the Light, leſt their Deeds ſhould be made mani-
ſt, and *be reproved* (e). But there is *a Light*, that *will*
ake manifeſt and *reprove their Works*, to which they
all be *compelled to come*, and the *painful Scrutiny of*
hich they ſhall be *forced to abide*.

§. 5. In the mean Time, if you are *determined* to *en-*
ire no farther into the Matter *now*, give me Leave at
aſt, *from a ſincere Concern*, that you may not *heap upon*
ur Head more aggravated Ruin, to intreat you, that
ou would *be cautious* how you *expoſe yourſelf to yet*
reater Danger, by what you muſt yourſelf *own to be*
neceſſary, I mean, *Attempts to pervert others from be-*
ving the Truth of the Goſpel. Leave them, for
OD's Sake, and for your own, in *Poſſeſſion of thoſe*
leaſures, and *thoſe Hopes*, which *nothing but Chriſtia-*
y can give them; and act not *as if you were ſolicitous*
add to the Guilt of *an Infidel* the *tenfold Damna-*
n, which they, who have been *the Perverters* and *De-*
yers of the Souls of others, muſt expect to meet, if *that*
ſpel which they have *ſo adventurouſly oppoſed* ſhould
ve, as it certainly will, *a ſerious*, and to them *a dread-*
Truth.

§. 6. If I *cannot prevail* here, but *the Pride* of diſ-
ying a Superiority of Underſtanding ſhould bear on
h a Reader, even in Oppoſition to *his own favourite*
axims of the *Innocence of Error*, and the *Equality of all*
ligions conſiſtent with ſocial Virtue, to do his utmoſt to
mple down the Goſpel with Contempt; I would how-
r diſmiſs him with *one Propoſal*, which I think the
portance of the Affair may fully juſtify. If you *have*
e with your *Examination into Chriſtianity*, and *deter-*
e to live and conduct yourſelf *as if it were aſſured-*
alſe, ſit down then, and *make a Memorandum of that*
termination. Write it down; "On ſuch a Day of
ſuch a Year, *I deliberately reſolved*, that I would live
nd die *rejecting Chriſtianity* my ſelf, and *doing all I*
ould to overthrow it. This Day *I determined*, not
nly *to renounce* all Subjection to, and Expectation
rom, *Jeſus of Nazareth*; but alſo *to make it* a ſerious
art of *the Buſineſs of my Life*, to *deſtroy*, as far as I
oſſibly can, *all Regard to him* in the Mind of others,

(e) John iii. 20.

" and to *exert my most vigorous Efforts*, in the Way of
" *Reasoning* or of *Ridicule*, to *sink the Credit of his Re-*
" *ligion*, and if it be possible *to root it out of the World*:
" in calm steady Defiance of *that Day*, when his Fol-
" lowers say, *He shall appear* in so much Majesty and
" Terror *to execute the Vengeance* threatened to his
" *Enemies.*" Dare you *write this*, and *sign it*? I
firmly believe, that *many a Man*, who would be thought
a Deist, and endeavours to increase the Number, would
not. And if *you* in particular *dare not do it*, whence does
that small Remainder of Caution arise? The Cause is
plain. There is *in your Conscience* some *secret Appre-*
hension, that *this rejected, this opposed, this derided Gospel*
may after all *prove true*. And if there be *such an Ap-*
prehension, then let *Conscience do its Office*, and convict
you of the *impious Madness of acting*, as if it were not
certainly and *demonstrably false*. Let it tell you at large,
how possible it is that *haply you may be found fighting a-*
gainst GOD (f): That bold as you are in *defying the Ter-*
rors of the Lord, you may possibly *fall into his Hands*:
may chance to *hear that despised Sentence*, which will
you *hear it* from the Mouth of *the Eternal Judge*, you
will *not be able to despise*: I will repeat it again, in Spite
of *all your Scorn*, you may *hear the King* say to you, *Depart*
accursed, into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil
and his Angels (g). And now, go and *pervert* and *bur-*
lesque the Scripture, go and *lampoon* the Character of
Heroes, and *ridicule* the sublime Discourses of *its Pro-*
phets and *its Apostles*; as *some* have done, who have left
little behind them but the *short-lived Monuments* of their
Ignorance, their *Profaneness*, and their *Malice*. Go and
spread like them *the Banners of Infidelity*, and *prick*
self in the Number of *credulous Creatures* listed under
them. But *take heed*, lest *the insulted Galilean* direct a
secret Arrow to thine Heart, and *stop thy licentious Breath*
before it has *finished the next Sentence* thou wouldst utter
against him.

§. 7. I WILL now *turn myself* from *the Deist* or
Sceptick, and direct my Address to *the Nominal Chris-*
tian; if *he may* upon any Terms *be called a Christian*,
who *feels not*, after all I have pleaded, *a Disposition*

(f) Acts v. 39. (g) Mat. xxv. 41.

bject *himſelf* to the *Government* and the *Grace* of *that* viour, whoſe Name he bears. Oh Sinner, thou art rning *away from my Lord*, in whoſe Cauſe I ſpeak; but me earneſtly intreat thee ſeriouſly to conſider, *why* u *art turning away*, and *to whom thou wilt go*, m him, *whom* thou acknowledgeſt *to have the Words* Eternal *Life* (h). You call yourſelf *a Chriſtian*, d yet *will not* by any Means *be perſuaded* to *ſeek Sal*tion in good Earneſt from and thro' *Jeſus Chriſt*, om you call *your Maſter* and *your Lord*. How do you a Moment *excuſe this Negligence* to your *own Con*ence? If I had urged you on *any controverted Point*, might have *altered the Caſe*. If I had laboured hard *make you the Diſciple* of any *particular Party of Chriſ*ns, your *Delay* might have been *more reaſonable*: y, perhaps, your *refuſing to acquieſce* might have been *Act of apprehended Duty* to our common Maſter. But it *Matter of Controverſy* amongſt *Chriſtians*, whether re be *a great, holy*, and *righteous GOD*; and whether h *a Being*, whom we agree to own, ſhould be *reve*nced *and loved*, or *neglected and diſhonoured*? Is it atter *of Controverſy*, whether *a Sinner* ſhould deeply d ſeriouſly *repent of his Sins*, or whether he ſhould *go in them*? Is it *a diſputed Point* amongſt us, whether ſus *became incarnate*, and *died upon the Croſs*, for the demption *of Sinners*, or no? And if it *be not*, can it be ſputed by them who *believe him* to be *the Son of GOD* d *the Saviour of Men*, whether *a Sinner* ſhould *ſeek him*, or *neglect him*? or whether *one* who *profeſſes to* a *Chriſtian*, ſhould *depart from Iniquity*, or *give him*ſelf *up to the Practice of it*? Are *the Precepts* of our great after *written ſo obſcurely* in his Word, that there ſhould Room *ſeriouſly to queſtion*, whether he *require a de*ut, *holy, humble, ſpiritual, watchful, ſelf-denying Life*, whether he *allow the contrary*? Has *Chriſt*, after all Pretenſions of *bringing Life and Immortality to Light*, it *more uncertain* than he found it, whether there be *future State* of *Happineſs* and *Miſery*, or *for whom* ſe States are reſpectively *intended*? Is it *Matter of* ntroverſy, whether GOD *will*, or *will not*, *bring* ry *Work into Judgment, with every ſecret Thing, whe*ther

(h) John vi. 68.

ther it be Good, or whether it be Evil (i)? or whether, at the Concluſion of that Judgment, *the Wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting Puniſhment, and the Righteous into Life Eternal* (k)? You *will not*, I am ſure, for very Shame *pretend any Doubt* about theſe Things, and yet *call yourſelf a Chriſtian*. Why then *will you not be perſuaded* to *lay them to Heart*, and to *act* as *Duty* and *Intereſt* ſo evidently *require*? Oh Sinner, *the Cauſe* is too obvious; *a Cauſe* indeed *quite unworthy* of being called *a Reaſon*. It is *becauſe* thou art *blinded* and *befotted* with *thy Vanities* and *thy Luſts*. It is *becauſe* thou haſt *ſome periſhing Trifle*, which charms thy Imagination and thy Senſes, ſo that it is *dearer to thee* than GOD and *Chriſt*, than *thine own Soul* and *its Salvation*. 'Tis in a Word, *becauſe* thou art ſtill *under the Influence* of that *carnal Mind, which*, whatever pious Forms it may ſometimes admit and pretend, *is Enmity againſt GOD, and is not ſubject to the Law of GOD, neither indeed can be* (l). And therefore, thou art *in the very Caſe* of *thoſe Wretches*, concerning whom *our Lord* ſaid in the Days of his Fleſh, *Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have Life* (m), and therefore *ye ſhall die in your Sins* (n).

§. 8. In this Caſe, I ſee not *what it can ſignify*, to renew *thoſe Expoſtulations* and *Addreſſes*, which I have made in the *former Chapters*. As our bleſſed *Redeemer* ſays, of thoſe who *rejected his Goſpel*, Ye *have both ſeen, and hated, both me and my Father* (o); ſo may I truly ſay with regard to you, I have endeavoured to *ſhew you* in the plaineſt and the cleareſt Words *both Chriſt and the Father*; I have urged *the Obligations* you are under *to both*; I have laid before you *your Guilt*, and *your Condemnation*; I have pointed out *the only Remedy*; I have pointed out *the Rock*, on which I have built *my own Eternal Hopes*, and *the Way*, in which alone *I expect Salvation*. I have recommended *thoſe Things to you*, which, if GOD gives me an Opportunity, I would *with my dying Breath* earneſtly and affectionately recommend *to my own Children*, and to all *the deareſt Friends* that I have upon Earth, eſteeming it the higheſt Token of *my Friendſhip*, the ſureſt Proof of *my Love* to them.

And

(i) Eccleſ. xii. 14. (k) Mat. xxv. 46. (l) Rom. viii. 7.
(m) John vi. 40. (n) John viii. 24. (o) John xv. 24.

And if *believing the Gospel to be true*, you *resolve to reject it*, I have *nothing farther to say*, but that you must *abide by the Consequence.* —— Yet, as *Moses*, when he *went out from the Presence of Pharaoh* for the last Time, finding *his Heart yet more hardened* by all the *Judgments* and *Deliverances* with which he had formerly been exercised, *denounced upon him* GOD's *passing thro' the Land* in Terror *to smite the First-born with Death*, and warned him of *that great and lamentable Cry* which *the Sword of the destroying Angel* should raise *throughout all his Realm* (p): So *will I*, Sinner, now when I am quitting thee, *speak to thee* yet again, *whether thou wilt hear, or whether thou wilt forbear* (q), and *denounce* that *much more terrible Judgment*, which *the Sword of Divine Vengeance*, already *whetted* and *drawn*, and *bathed* as it were *in Heaven* (r), is *preparing against thee*; which shall end in *a much more doleful Cry*, tho' thou wert *greater* and *more obstinate than that haughty Monarch.* Yes, Sinner, that I may, with the *Apostle Paul*, when *turning to others* who are more like to hear me, *shake my Raiment and say, I am pure from your Blood* (s); I will once more tell you, *what the End of these Things will be.* And, Oh that I could *speak to Purpose!* Oh that I could *thunder in your Ear* such *a Peal of Terror*, as might *awaken you*, and be *too loud* to be *drown'd* in all the Noise of *carnal Mirth*, or to be *deaden'd* by those dangerous *Opiates*, with which thou art contriving to *stupify thy Conscience!*

9. SEEK *what Amusements* and *Entertainments* thou wilt, Oh Sinner, I tell thee, if thou wert *equal* in Dignity, and Power, and Magnificence, to the *great Monarch of Babylon*, *Thy Pomp shall be brought down to the Grave, and all the Sound of thy Viols; the Worm shall be spread under thee, and the Worm shall cover thee* (t). Yes, Sinner, *the End of these Things is Death* (u); Death *in its most terrible Sense* to thee, if *this* continue *thy governing Temper.* Thou *canst not avoid it*; and, if it be possible for any Thing that I can say to prevent, thou

(p) Exod. xi. 4,---6. (q) Ezek. ii. 7. (r) Isai. xxvii. 5. (s) Acts xviii. 6. (t) Isai. xiv. 11. (u) Rom. vi. 23.

thou *shalt not forget it.* Your *Strength is not the Strength of Stones, nor is your Flesh of Brass* (x). You are *accessible to Diseases*, as well as others; and, if some *sudden Accident* do not prevent it, we shall *see*, how *heroically* you will behave yourself *on a dying Bed*, and *in the near Views of Eternity*. You, that now *despise Christ*, and *trifle with his Gospel*, we shall see you *droop* and *languish*; shall see *all your Relish* for your *carnal Recreations*, and your *vain Companions*, lost. And if perhaps one and another of them *bolt in upon you*, and is brutish and desperate enough to attempt *to entertain a dying Man*, with *a gay Story*, or *a profane Jest*, we shall see *how you will relish it.* We shall see, *what Comfort* you will have *in reflecting on what is past*, or *what Hope* in *looking forward to what is to come.* Perhaps *trembling* and *astonished*, you will then *be enquiring* in a wild Kind of Consternation, *what you shall do to be saved*; calling for *the Ministers of Christ*, whom you *now despise* for the Earnestness with which they would labour to save your Soul; and it may be, *falling into a Delirium*, or *dying Convulsions*, before they can come. Or perhaps we may see you, *flattering yourselves*, thro' a long lingering Illness, *that you shall still recover*, and putting off *any serious Reflection* and *Conversation*, for Fear it should *over-set your Spirits.* And the *cruel Kindness* of *Friends* and *Physicians*, as if they were *in League with Satan* to make *the Destruction of your Soul* as sure as possible, may perhaps *aid this fatal Deceit.*

§. 10. And if any of these *probable Cases* happen, that is, in short, unless *a Miracle of Grace* snatch you *as a Brand out of the Burning*, when *the Flames have* as it were *already taken hold* of you; *all these gloomy Circumstances*, which pass in the *Chambers of Illness* and the *Bed of Death*, are but *the Fore-runners of infinitely more dreadful Things.* Oh, who can *describe them*, who can *imagine them!* When *surviving Friends* tenderly *mourning* over the *breathless Corpse*, and taking *a fond Farewell of it* before it is laid to *consume away* in the dark and silent *Grave*, into *what Hands*, Oh Sinner, will *thy Soul* be fallen! *What Scenes* will open

(x) Job vi. 12.

ſeparate Spirit, even before *thy deſerted Fleſh* be *cold*, *thy ſightleſs Eyes* are *cloſed!* It ſhall then *know*, what *is to return to GOD* to be *rejected by him*, as having *jected his Goſpel* and *his Son*, and *deſpiſed* the *only eaty of Reconciliation*; and that *ſuch a one*, ſo amaz-gly *condeſcending* and *gracious*. Thou ſhalt *know*, at it is *to be diſowned by Chriſt*, whom thou haſt *re-ſed to entertain*; and what it is, as the certain and mediate *Conſequence* of that, *to be left in the Hands* of malignant *Spirits of Hell*. There will be *no more iendſhip* then: None *to comfort*, none *to alleviate* thy *ony* and *Diſtreſs*: But on the contrary, *all around e* labouring *to aggravate* and *increaſe them*. Thou lt *paſs away* the intermediate Years of *the ſeparate ate*, in *dreadful Expectation*, and bitter Outcries of *rror* and *Remorſe*. And *then*, thou ſhalt *hear the umpet of the Arch-Angel*, in whatever Cavern of *that ony World* thou art lodged. It ſhall *penetrate thy riſon*, where, *doleful* and *horrible* as it is, thou ſhalt verthleſs *wiſh*, that thou mighteſt ſtill *be allowed to le thy guilty Head*, rather than *ſhew it before the Face* that *awful Judge*, before whom *Heaven and Earth t fleeing away* (y). But thou *muſt come forth*, and be *nited to a Body*, now formed *for ever to endure Ago-s*, which in this mortal State would have *diſſolved it a Moment*. You would *not be perſuaded* to *come to riſt* before: You would *ſtupidly neglect him*, in Spight *Reaſon*, in Spight of *Conſcience*, in Spight of *all the dereſt Solicitations of the Goſpel*, and the *repeated monitions of its moſt faithful Miniſters*. But now, ner, you *ſhall have an Interview with him*; if that y be called *an Interview*, in which you *will not dare ift up your Head* to view the Face of your *tremendous inexorable Judge*. There at leaſt, how *diſtant* ſoe-*the Time of our Life* and *the Place of our Abode* may e been, *there* ſhall we ſee, how couragiouſly *your art will endure*, and how *ſtrong your Hands will be*, *en the Lord doth this* (z). Then ſhall I *ſee thee*, Oh ader, whoever thou art that *goeſt on in thine Impeni-y*, among Thouſands and ten Thouſands of *deſpair-Wretches*, *trembling* and *confounded*. There ſhall I *hear*

(y) Rev. xx. 11. (z) Ezek. xxii. 14.

hear thy Cries among the rest, *rending the very Heavens* in vain. *The Judge* will *rise from the Tribunal* with Majestick Composure, and *leave thee* to be *hurried down to those Everlasting Burnings*, to which *his righteous Vengeance hath doomed thee*, because *thou wouldst not be saved* from them. *Hell* shall *shut its Mouth upon thee for ever*, and the *sad Eccho* of *thy Groans* and *Outcries* shall *be lost* amidst the *Hallelujahs of Heaven* to all that *find Mercy of the Lord in that Day.*

§. 11. THIS will most assuredly be *the End of those Things:* And *thou*, as *a Christian*, professest to *know*, and to *believe it.* It *moves my Heart* at least, if it *moves not thine.* I firmly believe, that *every one*, who himself *obtains Salvation and Glory*, will bear *so much of his Saviour's Image* in *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, in *Zeal for GOD*, and *a steady Regard* to the *Happiness of the whole Creation*, that he will *behold this sad Scene* with calm *Approbation*, and without *any painful Commotion of Mind.* But as yet *I am Flesh and Blood*; and therefore *my Bowels are troubled*, and *mine Eyes* often *overflow with Grief*, to think, that *wretched Sinners* will have *no more Compassion upon their own Souls*; to think, that in Spight of *all Admonition*, they will *obstinately run upon final Everlasting Destruction.* It would *signify nothing here*, to add *a Prayer*, or *a Meditation*, for your Use. *Poor Creature!* you *will not meditate!* you *will not pray!* Yet as I have often *poured out my Heart in Prayer* over *a dying Friend*, when the Force of his Distemper has rendered him *incapable of joining with me*; so will I now *apply myself to GOD for you.* Oh unhappy Creature! And if *you disdain* so much as *to read* what *my Compassion* dictates; yet I hope, *those* who have *felt the Power of the Gospel* on their own Souls, as they *cannot but pity such as you*, will *join with me* in such *cordial*, tho' *broken Petitions* for these.

A Pra-

A PRAYER *in behalf of an Impenitent Sinner, in the Caſe deſcribed above.*

ALMIGHTY GOD! *with Thee all Things are poſſible* (a): To Thee therefore *do I humbly apply myſelf* in Behalf of *this Dear Immortal Soul*, which Thou here ſeeſt *periſhing in his Sins*, and *hardening his Heart* againſt *that everlaſting Goſpel*, which has been *the Power of GOD to the Salvation* of ſo many Thouſands and Millions. *Thou art Witneſs*, Oh Bleſſed GOD, *Thou art Witneſs* to the *Plainneſs* and *Serioufneſs*, with which *the Meſſage* has been *delivered*. It is *in Thy Preſence* that *theſe awful Words* have been *written*; and *in Thy Preſence* have they been *read*. Be pleaſed therefore to record it *in the Book of Thy Remembrance*, that ſo *if this wicked Man dieth in his Iniquity*, after *the Warning* has been ſo plainly and ſo ſolemnly *given him, his Blood may not be required at my Hand* (b), nor *at the Hand* of that *Chriſtian Friend*, who ever he is, *by whom this Book* has been *put into his*, with a ſincere Deſire *for the Salvation of his Soul*. Be Witneſs, Oh Bleſſed *Jeſus*, *in the Day in which Thou ſhalt judge the Secrets of all Hearts* (c), that *Thy Goſpel* hath been *preached to this hardened Wretch*, and *Salvation by Thy Blood* hath been *offered him*, tho' he continue to *deſpiſe it*. And may *Thine unworthy Meſſenger* be *unto GOD a ſweet Savour in Chriſt*, in this very Soul, even tho' it ſhould at laſt *periſh* (d)!

" But, Oh that, after *all his Hardneſs* and *Impenitence*, Thou wouldſt *ſtill be pleaſed*, by the Sovereign Power of Thine efficacious Grace, *to awaken* and *convert him!* Well do we *know*, Oh Thou LORD of univerſal Nature, that *He who made the Soul*, can cauſe *the Sword of Conviction* to *come near unto it*. Oh that, in Thine Infinite *Wiſdom* and *Love*, Thou wouldſt *find out a Way* to interpoſe, and *ſave this Sinner* from *Death*, from *Eternal Death!* Oh that, if it be *Thy bleſſed Will*, Thou wouldſt *immediately*

" *do*

(a) Mat. xix. 26. (b) Ezek. xxxiii. 8, 9. (c) Rom. ii. 16. (d) 2 Cor. ii. 15.

" *do it!* Thou *knoweſt*, Oh GOD, *he is a dying Creature:* Thou *knoweſt*, that if *any Thing* be done for " him, *it muſt be done quickly:* Thou *ſeeſt*, in the Book " of Thy wiſe and gracious Decrees, *a Moment* marked, " which muſt *ſeal him up* in an *unchangeable* State. " Oh that Thou wouldſt *lay hold on him*, while he is yet " *joined to the Living*, and *hath Hope* (e)! Thy immutable *Laws* in the Diſpenſation of Grace *forbid*, that " *a Soul* ſhould be *converted* and *renewed* after its Departure " *trance on the Inviſible World:* Oh let *Thy Sanctifying* " *Spirit work*, while *he is yet* as it were *within the* " *Sphere of His Operations!* Work, Oh GOD, *by what-* " *ever Method Thou pleaſeſt*; only *have Mercy upon* " *him!* Oh Lord, *have Mercy upon him*, that he *fall not* " to *thoſe Depths* of *Damnation* and *Ruin*, on the very " *Brink of which*, he ſo evidently appears! Oh that Thou " wouldſt *bring him*, if that be *neceſſary*, and ſeem to " Thee *moſt expedient*, into *any Depths* of *Calamity* or " *Diſtreſs!* Oh that, with *Manaſſeh*, he may be *taken* " *Thorns, and laden with the Fetters of Affliction*, if " may but cauſe him *to ſeek the* GOD *of his Fathers* (f).

" BUT I preſcribe not to *Thine Infinite Wiſdom*. " Thou haſt *diſplayed Thy Power* in glorious and ad- " miſhing *Inſtances*; which I thank Thee, that I have " ſo *circumſtantially known*, and by the *Knowledge* of " *them* have been *fortified* againſt the *raſh Confidence* of " thoſe, who weakly and arrogantly pronounce *that* to " be *impoſſible*, which *is actually done*. Thou haſt, I " know, *done that* by *a ſingle Thought* in Retirement, " when the happy Man *reclaimed by it* hath been *far* " *from Means*, and *far from Ordinances*, which neither " the moſt awful *Admonitions*, nor the moſt tender " *treaties*, nor the moſt terrible *Afflictions*, nor the " moſt wonderful *Deliverances* had been able to effect.

" *Glorify Thy Name*, Oh Lord, and *glorify Thy* " *Grace*, in *the Method* which to Thine Infinite " Wiſdom ſhall ſeem *moſt expedient!* Only grant, " *I beſeech Thee*, with all humble Submiſſion to Thy " Will, that *this Sinner may be ſaved!* or *if not*, that " *the Labour of this Part* may not be altogether " *vain*; but that *if ſome reject it* to their aggravation

(e) Eccleſ. ix. 4. (f) 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, 12.

Ruin, *others* may *hearken and live!* That *those Thy Servants*, who have *laboured* for their *Deliverance* and *Happineſs*, may *view them* in the Regions of Glory, *as the Spoils* which Thou haſt honoured them *as the Inſtruments of recovering*; and may *join with them* in the *Hallelujahs* of Heaven, *to Him, who hath loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in His own Blood, and hath made us* of condemned Rebels, and accurſed polluted Sinners, *Kings and Prieſts unto GOD; to Him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever! Amen* (g).

(g) Rev. i. 5. 6.

CHAP. XII.

An Addreſs to a Soul ſo overwhelmed with a Senſe of the Greatneſs of its Sins, that it dares not apply itſelf to CHRIST with any Hope of Salvation.

The Caſe deſcribed at large, §. 1,—4. *as it frequently occurs.* §. 5. *Granting all that the Dejected Soul charges on itſelf,* §. 6. *the Invitations and Promiſes of Chriſt give Hope.* §. 7. *The Reader urged, under all his Burthens and Fears, to an humble Application to Him:* §. 8. *Which is accordingly exemplified in the concluding Reflection and Prayer.*

§. 1. I HAVE *now done* with thoſe *unhappy Creatures* who *deſpiſe the Goſpel,* and with thoſe who *neglect it.* With Pleaſure do I now *turn myſelf* to thoſe who *will hear me with more Regard.* Among *the various Caſes,* which now *preſent themſelves* to my Thoughts, and *demand* my tender, affectionate, reſpectful *Care,* there is *none more worthy of Compaſſion,* than that which I have mentioned *in the Title of this Chapter,* none, which *requires* a more immediate *Attempt* of *Relief.*

§. 2. IT is very poſſible, *ſome afflicted Creature* may be ready to cry out, "*It is enough:* Aggravate not "*Grief,* and *my Diſtreſs, no more. The Sentence* you "have been *ſo awfully deſcribing,* as what *ſhall be* "*paſſed* and *executed* on the *Impenitent* and *Unbeliev*"*ing,* is *my Sentence;* and the *Terrors of it* are *my* "*Terrors.* For *mine Iniquities are gone up* unto the "*Heavens,* and *my Tranſgreſſions have reached* unto

" *the Clouds* (a). My Case is *quite singular:* Surely " there never was *so great a Sinner* as I. I have re- " ceived *so many Mercies*, I have enjoyed *so many Ad-* " *vantages*, I have heard *so many Invitations of Gos-* " *pel Grace*; and yet *my Heart* has been *so hard*, and " *my Nature* is *so exceeding sinful*, and the Number " and aggravating Circumstances of *my Provocations* " have been *such*, that *I dare not hope*. It is *enough*, " that GOD hath *supported me thus long*; it is *enough*, " that after so many *Years of Wickedness*, I am *yet out* " *of Hell*. Every Day's *Reprieve* is *a Mercy*, at which " I am *astonished*. I *lie down*, and *wonder*, that *Death* " and *Damnation* have not *seized me* in my Walks " the Day past. I *arise*, and *wonder*, that *my Bed* " hath not been *my Grave*; *wonder*, that *my Soul* is " not *separated from Flesh*, and *surrounded* with *De-* " *vils* and *Damned Spirits*.

§. 3. " I HAVE indeed *heard the Message of Salvation*; " but alas, it seems *no Message of Salvation* to *me*. " There are *happy Souls* that have *Hope*; and *their Hope* " is indeed *in Christ*, and *the Grace of* GOD mani- " fested in him. But then *they feel* in their Hearts *an* " *Encouragement to apply to him*; whereas *I dare not* do " it. *Christ* and *Grace* are Things, in which, I fear, " *I have no Part*, and must *expect none*. There are " *exceeding rich* and *precious Promises* in the Word of " GOD; but they are *to me as a sealed Book*, and " are *hid from me* as to any personal Use. I know, " *Christ* is *able to save*: I know, he is *willing to save* " some. But that he should be *willing* to *save me*, " such a *polluted*, such a *provoking Creature*, as GOD " knows, and as *Conscience* knows, *I have been*, and " *to this Day* am; this *I know not how to believe*; and " the utmost that I can do *towards believing it*, is *to* " *acknowledge* that it *is not absolutely impossible*, and " that I do not yet *lie down in compleat Despair*; tho' " alas, I seem *upon the very Borders of it*, and expect " every Day and Hour *to fall into it*."

§. 4. I SHOULD not perhaps have *entered so fully* " *to this Case*, if I had not *seen many in it*; and I will " tell, Reader, *for your Encouragement* if it be your Case,

(a) Rev. xviii. 5.

 However bad the Case of such may be, Ch.
several who are *now in the Number* of the *most e*
ed, chearful, and *useful Christians.* And I hope,
vine Grace will *add you* to the rest, if *out of these D*
you be enabled to *cry unto GOD* (b); and tho', like
nah, you may seem to be *cast out from his Presence,*
still, with *Jonah,* you *look towards his holy Temple* (c).

§. 5. LET it not be imagined, that it is in any
lest of that *Blessed Spirit,* whose Office it is to be
great *Comforter,* that I now attempt to *reason* you out
this *disconsolate Frame:* For it is as the great *Sweet*
Reason, that he deals with *Rational Creatures*; and it
in the Use of *Rational Means* and *Considerations,*
he may most justly be *expected to operate.* Give
Leave therefore, to address myself calmly to you,
ask you, *What Reason* you have for all these
sionate Complaints and *Accusations* against your
What Reason have you *to conclude,* that *your Case*
singular, when *so many* have told you, they have
the same? *What Reason* have you *to conclude so ha*
against yourself, when *the Gospel* speaks in such *sw*
able Terms? Or *what Reason* to imagine, that *the*
cious Things it says *are not intended for you?* You
indeed more of the *Corruptions* of *your own Heart,*
you know of the *Hearts of others*; and you make
Thousand charitable *Excuses* for *their* visible *Failing*
Infirmities, which you make not *for your own.* A
may be *some of those,* whom you admire as *eminent S*
when compared with *you,* are on their Part *humb*
themselves in the Dust *as unworthy* to be numbe
among *the least of GOD's People,* and wishing *them*
like you, in whom they think they *see much more G*
and *much less of Evil,* than in themselves.

§. 6. BUT to *suppose the worst,* What if you w
really *the vilest Sinner* that ever lived upon the Fac
the Earth? What if *your Iniquities* had *gone up unto*
Heavens every Day, and *your Transgressions* had *reac*
unto the Clouds (d); reached thither *with such h*
Aggravations, that Earth and Heaven should have
Reason to detest you, as *a Monster of Impiety?* Ad
ting all this, *Is any thing too hard for the Lord* (e)?

(b) Psal. cxxx. 1. (c) Jonah ii. 4. (d) Rev. xvii.
(e) Gen. xviii. 14.

y Sins, of which a Sinner can repent, *of so deep a Dye, at the Blood of Christ* cannot *wash them away?* Nay, o' it would be *daring Wickedness* and *monstrous Folly, any to sin that Grace might abound* (f). yet had you deed raised your Account *beyond all* that *Divine Grace* s ever yet *pardoned*, who should *limit the Holy One of ael* (g)? or who should pretend to say, that *it was impible* that GOD might for your very Wretchedness *chuse ut* from others, to make you *a Monument of Mercy, d a Trophy* of hitherto unparallelled *Grace?* The Aostle *Paul* strongly intimates *this* to have been *the Case*, th Regard to *himself:* And why might not *you* likeise, if indeed *the Chief of Sinners, obtain Mercy, that you, as the Chief, Jesus Christ might shew forth all ng-Suffering, for a Pattern to them who shall hereafbelieve* (h)?

§. 7. GLOOMY as *your Apprehensions* are, I would you plainly, *Do you* in your Conscience *think*, that *rist is not able to save you?* What, is He not *able to e* even *to the uttermost, them that come unto GOD him* (i)? Yes, you will say, *abundantly able* to do but I dare not imagine, that *He will do it.* And w do you *know*, that *He will not?* He has helped *very greatest Sinners* of all that have yet applied mselves to him: And he has made *the Offers of Grace d Salvation* in the most engaging and encouraging rms. *If any Man thirst, let him come unto me, and nk* (k): *Let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely* (l): *e unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, I will give you Rest* (m): And once more, *Him that eth unto me, I will in no wise cast out* (n). True, you say, *None that are given him by the Father:* id I know, *I were of that Number*, I could then apchearfully to him. But, dear Reader, let me intreat to *look into the Text itself*, and see, whether *that itation* be expressly *added there.* Do you *there* read, *e of them whom the Father hath given me, shall be cast* ? The Words are in a much more *encouraging Form:* And

) Rom. vi. 1. (g) Psal. lxxviii. 41. (h) 1 Tim.
, 16. (i) Heb. vii. 25. (k) John vii. 37.
Rev. xxii. 17. (m) Mat. xi. 28. (n) John vi. 37.

why ſhould you *fruſtrate* his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, by *ſuch an Addition* of your own? *Add not to his Words, leſt he reprove thee* (o): Take them as they ſtand, and drink in the Conſolation of them. *Our Lord* knew to what *Perplexity* ſome ſerious Minds might poſſibly be thrown by what he had before been ſaying, *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come unto me*; and therefore, as if it were on Purpoſe *to balance it*, he adds the gracious Words, *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe*, by no Means, on no Conſideration whatſoever, *caſt out*.

§. 8. If therefore you are already *diſcouraged* and *terrified* at the Greatneſs of your Sins, *do not add to* the Weight and Number *that one* greater and worſe than all the reſt, *a Diſtruſt of the Faithfulneſs and Grace of the Bleſſed Redeemer*. Do not, ſo far as in you lies, *ſuppreſs all the Purpoſes of his Love* to you. Oh diſtreſſed Soul, *whom* doſt thou *dread?* To *whom* doſt thou *tremble to approach?* Is there any Thing *ſo terrible*, in *a tender Redeemer*, in *the Lamb that was ſlain?* If thou canſt *lay thy Soul* almoſt ſinking under the Burthen of its Guilt *to lay it down at his Feet*, what doſt thou *offer* but *the Spoil* which *he bled* and *died* to recover and poſſeſs? And did he *purchaſe it ſo dearly*, that he may *reject it with Diſdain?* Go to him directly, and lay down in his Preſence, and plead *that Miſery of* which thou haſt now been pleading in a contrary View, as *an Engagement* to *your own Soul* to make the Application, and as *an Argument* with the compaſſionate Saviour to receive you. Go, and be aſſured, that *where ſin hath abounded*, there *Grace ſhall much more abound* (p). Be aſſured, that if *one Sinner* can promiſe himſelf a more *certain Welcome* than another, it is *not he* that is leſs *guilty* and *miſerable*, but *he* that is *moſt deeply humbled* before GOD *under a Senſe* of that Miſery and Guilt, and *lies the loweſt* in the Apprehenſion of it.

(o) Prov. xxx. 6. (p) Rom. v. 20.

REFLECTION *on these Encouragements, ending in an humble and earnest Application to* Christ *for Mercy.*

OH my Soul, what sayest thou to these Things? Is there not at least *a Possibility of Help* from *Christ?* And is there *a Possibility of Help* any *other Way?* Is any *other Name given under Heaven, whereby we may be saved?* I know, *there is none* (q). I must then say, like *the Lepers of Israel* (r), *If I sit here, I perish; and if I make my Application in vain, I can but die* But peradventure, *He may save my Soul alive.* I will therefore *arise, and go unto Him*: or rather, *believing Him here* by His Spiritual Presence, *sinful* and *miserable* as I am, I will this Moment *fall down on my Face* before Him, and *pour out my Soul* unto Him.

"BLESSED *Jesus*, I present myself unto Thee, as a *wretched Creature, driven* indeed *by Necessity* to do it. For surely were not *that Necessity* urgent and absolute, I should not dare *for very Shame* to appear in Thine Holy and Majestick Presence. I am *fully convinced*, that *my Sins* and *my Follies* have been *inexcusably great*, more than I can express, more than I can conceive. I feel *a Source of Sin* in my corrupt and degenerate Nature, which *pours out Iniquity*, as *a Fountain* sends out *its Water*, and makes me *a Burthen* and *a Terror to myself.* Such *Aggravations* have attended *my Transgressions*, that it looks like *Presumption*, so much as to *ask Pardon for them.* And yet, would it not be *greater Presumption* to say, that *they exceed Thy Mercy*, and *the Efficacy of Thy Blood?* to say, that *Thou hast Power and Grace enough* to pardon and save *only Sinners of a lower Order*, while such as I *lie out of Thy Reach?* Preserve me from *that blasphemous Imagination!* Preserve me from *that unreasonable Suspicion!* Lord, *Thou canst do all Things, neither is there any Thought of mine Heart withholden from Thee* (s). Thou art indeed, as Thy Word declares, *able to save unto the uttermost* (t). And therefore, *breaking thro'* all the Oppositions of *Shame*

" and

(q) Acts iv. 12. (r) 2 Kings vii. 4. (s) Job. xlii. 2. Heb. vii. 25.

" and *Fear*, that would *keep me from Thee*, I come and *lie* " *down as in the Duſt* before Thee. *Thou knowest*, Oh " Lord, *all my Sins*, and *all my Follies* (u). I cannot, " and I hope I may ſay, I would not, *diſguiſe them* before " Thee, or ſet myſelf to *find out plauſible Excuſes*. *Ac-* " *cuſe me*, Lord, as thou pleaſeſt; and I will ingenuouſly " *plead guilty* to all Thine Accuſations. I will own my- " ſelf *as great a Sinner*, as Thou calleſt me: But I am " ſtill *a Sinner*, that *comes unto Thee* for Pardon. *If I* " *muſt die*, it ſhall be *ſubmitting*, and *owning the Juſtice* " of the fatal Stroke. *If I periſh*, it ſhall be *laying hold* " as it were, *on the Horns of the Altar*; laying myſelf " down *at Thy Feet ſtool*, tho' I have been *ſuch a Rebel* " againſt Thy Throne. *Many* have *received a full Pardon* " there; have *met with Favour* even beyond their Hopes. " And are *all Thy Compaſſions*, Oh bleſſed *Jeſus*, *exhauſted*? " And wilt Thou *now begin to reject* an humble Creature, " who *flies to Thee for Life*, and pleads nothing but *Mer-* " *cy* and *Free Grace*? *Have Mercy upon me*, Oh moſt " gracious Redeemer, *have Mercy upon me*, and *let my* " *Life be precious in Thy Sight* (x)! Oh do not reſolve to " *ſend me down* to that State of *final Miſery* and *Deſpair*, " from which it was *Thy gracious Purpoſe* to *deliver* and " *ſave ſo many*?

" *Spurn me not away*, Oh Lord, from Thy Preſence, " nor be *offended* when I preſume to *lay hold on Thy Royal* " *Robe*, and ſay, that *I cannot*, and *will not let Thee go*, " till my Suit is granted (y)! Oh remember, that *my E-* " *ternity* is *at Stake*! Remember, Oh Lord, that *all my* " *Hopes* of obtaining *Eternal Happineſs*, and avoiding " *everlaſting*, *helpleſs*, *hopeleſs Deſtruction*, are *anchored* " *upon Thee*: They hang upon *Thy Smiles*, or drop at *Thy* " *Frown*. Oh *have Mercy upon me*, for the Sake of this " *immortal Soul of mine*! Or if not for the Sake of mine " *alone*, for the Sake of *many others*, who may, on the " one hand, be *encouraged* by *Thy Mercy to me*, or on the " other, may be greatly *wounded* and *diſcouraged* by " *my helpleſs Deſpair*! I beſeech Thee, Oh Lord, for Thine " *own Sake*, and for the Diſplay of *Thy Father's* rich and " ſovereign *Grace*; I beſeech Thee by *the Blood* That " didſt *ſhed on the Croſs*; I beſeech Thee by *the Covenant*

(u) Pſal. lxix. 5. (x) 2 Kings i. 14. (y) Gen. xxxii. 26.

" *of Grace and Peace*, into which *the Father* did enter with *Thee* for the Salvation of *believing* and *repenting Sinners*, ſave me! *Save me*, Oh Lord, who earneſtly *deſire* to *repent* and *believe!* I am indeed *a Sinner*, in whoſe final and everlaſting *Deſtruction* Thy *Juſtice* might be greatly *glorified:* But Oh, if Thou wilt *pardon me*, it will be *a Monument* raiſed to the *Honour of Thy Grace* and the *Efficacy of Thy Blood*, in Proportion to the Degree in which *the Wretch*, to whom *Thy Mercy* is extended, was *mean* and *miſerable* without it. *Speak*, Lord, *by Thy Bleſſed Spirit*, and *baniſh my Fears!* Look upon me with *Love* and *Grace* in Thy Countenance, and *ſay to me*, as *in the Days of Thy Fleſh* Thou didſt to many an humble Suppliant, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee, go in Peace.*"

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The doubting Soul more particularly assisted in its Enquiries as to the Sincerity of Faith and Repentance.

Transient Impressions liable to be mistaken for Conversion which would be a fatal Error. §. 1. *General Scheme for Self-Examination.* §. 2. *Particular Enquiries.* (1.) *What Views there have been of Sin?* §. 3. (2.) *What Views there have been of Christ?* §. 4. *And what Need the Soul has of Him:* § 5. *And its Willingness to receive him with a due Surrender of Heart to his Service.* §. 6. *Nothing short of this, sufficient.* §. 7. *The Soul submitting to Divine Examination the Sincerity of its Faith and Repentance.*

§. 1. IN Consequence of *all the serious Things*, which have been said in the *former Chapters*, I hope there will be *no false Presumption* to imagine, that *some Religious Impressions* may be made *on Hearts* which had never felt *them* before, or may be *revived* where they have formerly *grown cold and languid*. Yet I am very sensible, and I desire that you may be so, *how great Danger* there is *of Self-Flattery* on this important Head; and *how necessary* it is *to caution Men*, against *too hasty a Conclusion* that they are *really converted*, because they have *felt some warm Emotion* on their Minds, and have *performed the gross Irregularities* of their former Conduct. *A Mistake here* might be *infinitely fatal:* It may prove the Occasion of that *false Peace*, which shall lead a Man to *bless himself in his own Heart*, and to conclude himself secure, while *all the Threatnings* and *Curses* of *GOD's Law* are sounding in his Ears, and *lie in wait* [illegible]

ctly *against him* (a): While in the mean Time he *ies to himself* a Thousand *Promises*, in which he has *hart*; which may prove therefore like *generous e* to a Man *in an high Fever*, or *strong Opiates* to *in a Lethargy*. The *Stony Ground received the rd with Joy*, and a promising Harvest seemed to be nging up; yet *it soon withered away* (b), and no per filled his Arms with it: Now that *this* may not *be Case with you*, that *all my Labours* and *yours hi-ro* may not be *lost*, and that *a vain Dream* of *Secu-* and *Happiness* may not plunge you deeper in *Misery Ruin*, give me Leave to lead you into *a serious En-y into your own Heart*; that so you may be better to *judge of your Case*, and to *distinguish* between t is at most being only *near the Kingdom of Heaven*, becoming indeed *a Member of it.*

. 2. Now this depends upon *the Sincerity* of your *ith in Christ*, when *Faith* is taken in its largest Ex-, as explained above; that is, as comprehending *Repen-ce*, and that *steady Purpose* of *new* and *universal Obe-nce*, of which, wherever it is real, *Faith* will assured-be *the vital Principle.* Therefore to assist you *in ing of your State*, give me Leave to ask you, or ra-r to intreat you to ask yourself, *What Views* you e had, and now have, *of Sin*, and *of Christ?* And t *your future Purposes* are, with regard to *your Con-* in the Remainder of Life that may lie before you? hall not *reason largely* upon the several Particulars I gest under *these Heads*, but rather *refer you* to your n Reading and Observation, to judge *how agreeable* y are *to the Word of GOD*, the great *Rule*, by ich *our Characters* must quickly be *tried*, and *our rnal State* unalterably *determined.*

. 3. Enquire seriously, in the first Place, *What ws* you have had *of Sin*, and what Sentiments you e felt in your Soul with Regard to it? There was *a e*, when it wore *a flattering Aspect*, and made a fair hanting Appearance, so that *all your Heart* was *charm-with it*, and it was *the very Business of your Life* to ctise it. But you have since been *undeceived.* You have

(a) Deut. xxix. 19, 20. (b) Matt. xiii. 5, 6.

have felt it *bite like a Serpent, and sting like an Adder* (c). You have beheld it with *an Abhorrence*, far greater than *the Delight* which it ever gave you. So far *it is well*. It is *thus* with *every true Penitent*, and with *some I* fear, who are *not of that Number*. Let me therefore enquire farther, *Whence arose this Abhorrence?* Was it merely from a Principle of *Self-love?* Was it merely because you had been *wounded by it?* Was it merely because you had thereby brought *Condemnation* and *Ruin* upon your own Soul? Was there *no Sense* of its *Deformity*, of its *Baseness*, of its *Malignity*, as committed against *the Blessed GOD*, considered as a Glorious, a Bountiful, and a Merciful Being? Were you *never pierced* by an Apprehension of *its vile Ingratitude?* And as for *those Purposes* which have arisen in your Heart *against it*, let me beseech you to reflect, *how* they have been *formed*, and *how* they have hitherto been *executed*. Have they been *universal?* Have they been *resolute?* And yet amidst all that Resolution, have they been *humble?* When you *declared War with Sin*, was it with *every Sin?* And is it *an irreconcileable War*, which you determine, by Divine Grace, to push on till you have *entirely conquered it*, or die in the Attempt? And are you accordingly *active* in your *Endeavours* to *subdue* and *destroy it?* If so, what are *the Fruits worthy of Repentance* which you *bring forth* (d)? It does not, I hope, *all flow away* in Floods of *Grief:* Have you *ceased to do Evil?* Are you *learning to do well* (e)? Doth your *Reformation* shew, that you *repent of your Sins*; or do your renewed *Relapses into Sin* prove, that you *repent* even of what you call *your Repentance?* Have you *an inward Abhorrence* of *all Sin*, and an unfeigned *Zeal against it?* And doth that produce *a Care* to guard against *the Occasions of it*, and *Temptations to it?* Do you *watch* against *the Circumstances* that have *infared you?* And do you particularly *double your Guard* against *that Sin which does most easily beset you* (f)? Is that *laid aside*, that *the Christian Race may be run*; laid aside with a firm Determination, that you will *return*

(c) Prov. xxiii. 32. (d) Luke iii, 8. (e) Isai. i, 16, (f) Heb. xii, 1.

no more, that you will *hold no more Parley with it*, that you will *never take another Step towards it?*

§. 4. PERMIT me also farther to enquire, What *your Views of Christ* have been? *What you think of Him*, and of *your Concern with Him?* Have you been *fully convinced*, that there must be *a Correspondence settled* between Him and your Soul? And do you see and feel, that you are not only *to pay Him* a Kind of *distant Homage*, and *transient Compliment*, as a very wise, benevolent, and excellent Person, whose Name and Memory you have a Reverence for; but that, as He *lives* and *reigns*, as He is *ever near you*, and *always observing you*, so you must *look to Him*, must *approach Him*, must humbly *transact Business with Him*, and that, *Business of the highest Importance*, on which your Salvation depends.

§. 5. You have been brought to enquire, *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most High* GOD (g)? And once perhaps you were *thinking of Sacrifices*, which your *own Stores* might have been sufficient to furnish out. Are you *now convinced*, they *will not suffice*; and that you must have Recourse *to the Lamb which* GOD *hath provided?* Have you had a View of *Jesus*, as *taking away the Sin of the World* (h)? as *made a Sin-Offering for us, tho' He knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of* GOD *in Him* (i)? Have you viewed Him, as *perfectly righteous* in himself; and *despairing of being justified* by *any Righteousness of your own*, have you *submitted to the Righteousness of* GOD (k)? Has your Heart ever been brought to *a deep Conviction* of this important Truth, that if ever you are *saved at all*, it must be *thro' Christ*; that if ever GOD *extend Mercy to you at all*, it must be *for his Sake*; that if ever you are *fixed in the Temple of* GOD *above*, you must *stand there* as an *everlasting Trophy* of that *Victory* which *Christ has gained* over the *Powers of Hell*, who would otherwise have triumphed over you?

§. 6. OUR LORD says, *Look unto me, and be ye saved* (l): He says, *If I be lifted up, I shall draw all men unto me* (m). Have you *looked to Him*, as the *only*

(g) Mic. vi. 6. (h) John i. 29. (i) 2 Cor. v. 21.
(k) Rom. x. 3. (l) Isa. xlv. 22. (m) John xii. 32.

Saviour? Have you been *drawn unto Him*, by that *ſacred Magnet*, the attractive Influence of *His dying Love?* Do you know what it is, to *come to Chriſt*, as a poor, *weary, and heavy laden Sinner*, that you may find *Reſt* (n)? Do you know what it is, in a ſpiritual Senſe, to *eat the Fleſh, and drink the Blood of the Son of Man* (o); that is, to look upon *Chriſt crucified* as the great Support *of your Soul*, and to feel *a Deſire after Him*, earneſt as the Appetite of Nature after its *neceſſary Food?* Have you known what it is, cordially to *ſurrender yourſelf* to *Chriſt*, as a poor Creature whom *Love* has made His *Property?* Have you *committed your immortal Soul* to *Him*, that he may *purify* and *ſave it*; that he may *govern it* by the Dictates of *His Word*, and the Influences of *His Spirit*; that he may *uſe it for His Glory*; that he may *appoint it* to what *Exerciſe* and *Diſcipline* he pleaſes, while it dwells here *in Fleſh*; and that he may *receive it at Death*, and fix it among *thoſe Spirits*, who with perpetual Songs of Praiſe *ſurround His Throne*, and are *His Servants for ever?* Have you heartily *conſented to this?* And do you, on this Account of the Matter, *renew your Conſent?* Do you renew it *deliberately* and *determinately*, and feel *your whole Soul*, as it were *ſaying AMEN*, while you read this? If *this* be *the Caſe*, then I can with great Pleaſure *give you* (as it were) *the Right Hand of Fellowſhip*, and ſalute and embrace you as a ſincere *Diſciple of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as one who is *delivered from the Power of Darkneſs*, and is *tranſlated into the Kingdom of the Son of GOD* (p). I can then *ſalute you in the Lord*, as one to whom, as a *Miniſter of Jeſus*, I am *commiſſioned* and *charged* to *ſpeak comfortably*, and to tell you, not that *I abſolve you from your Sins*, for no ſuch Power is committed to me, but that *GOD abſolveth you*; that you are one, to whom he hath *ſaid in his Goſpel*, and is continually ſaying, *Your Sins are forgiven you* (q); therefore *go in Peace*, and take the Comfort of it.

§. 7. BUT if you are *a Stranger* to theſe *Experiences*, and to this *Temper*, which I have now deſcribed, the *great Work is yet undone*; you are *an impenitent* and *unbelieving*

(n) Matt. xi. 28. (o) John vi. 53. (p) Col. i. 13. John
(q) Luke vii. 48.

lieving Sinner, and *the Wrath of* GOD *abideth on* (r). However you may have been *awakened* and *larmed*, whatever *Reſolutions* you may have *formed* for mending your Life, how *right* ſoever your *Notions* ay be, how *pure* ſoever your *Forms of Worſhip*, how *rdent* ſoever your *Zeal*, how *ſevere* ſoever your *Mortiation*, how *humane* ſoever your *Temper*, how *inoffenſive* ever your *Life* may be, I can ſpeak *no Comfort* to ou. *Vain are all your Religious Hopes*, if there has not en *a cordial Humiliation* before the Preſence of GOD *all your Sins*; if there has not been *this avowed War* clared againſt every Thing diſpleaſing to GOD; there has not been *this Senſe* of *your Need of Chriſt*, d of *your Ruin without Him*; if there has not been *s earneſt Application* to Him, *this Surrender of your l* into His Hands by Faith, *this Renunciation of your f*, that you might *fix on Him* as the great *An- r of your Hope*; if there has not been *this eſerved Dedication of yourſelf* to be at all nes, and in all Reſpects, *the faithful Servant* GOD *through him*; and if you do not with this *acknowledge*, that you are *an unprofitable Ser- t*, who have *no other Expectation* of *Acceptance*, or *Pardon*, but only *thro' His Righteouſneſs and Blood*, *thro' the Riches of Divine Grace in Him*; I repeat gain, that *all your Hopes are vain*, and you are *ding on the Sand* (s). The *Houſe* you have *already id* muſt be *thrown down to the Ground*, and *the dation* be *removed* and *laid anew*, or *you* and *all Hopes* will ſhortly be *ſwept away with it*, and *bu- under it* in Everlaſting Ruin.

Soul ſubmitting to Divine Examination the Sincerity of its Repentance and Faith.

O LORD GOD, Thou *ſearcheſt all Hearts*, and *trieſt the Reins* of the Children of Men (t). *earch me, Oh Lord, and know my Heart; try me, d know my Thoughts; and ſee if there be any wick- Way in me, and lead me in the Way everlaſt-* (u). Doth not *my Conſcience*, Oh Lord, *teſtify*

(r) John. iii. 36. (s) Matt. vii. 26. (t) Jer. xvii. 10. (u) Pſal. cxxxix. 23, 24.

" in Thy Presence, that *my Repentance* and *Faith* are
" *such* as have been described, or at least that it is my
" *earnest Prayer*, that they may be so? *Come* therefore,
" Oh Thou *Blessed Spirit*, who art the Author of all
" *Grace and Consolation*, and work *this Temper* more
" fully *in my Soul!* Oh represent *Sin* to mine Eyes in
" *all its most odious Colours*, that I may feel *a mortal*
" *and irreconcileable Hatred* to it! Oh represent *the Ma-*
" *jesty* and *Mercy* of the *Blessed GOD* in such a Man-
" ner, that *my Heart* may be *alarmed*, and that it may
" be *melted! Smite the Rock*, that *the Waters* may
" *flow* (x); *Waters* of genuine, undissembled, and filial
" *Repentance! Convince me*, Oh Thou *Blessed Spirit*
" *of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment* (y)! Show
" me, that *I have undone myself*, but that *my Help is*
" found *in GOD alone* (z), in GOD *thro' Christ*, in
" whom alone He will extend *Compassion* and Help to
" me! According to Thy peculiar Office, *take of Christ*
" *and shew it unto me* (a)! Shew me *His Power to*
" *save!* Shew me *His Willingness* to exert that Power.
" Teach my Faith to *behold Him*, as *extended on the*
" *Cross*, with *open Arms*, and with *a pierced* bleeding
" *Side*; and so telling me in the most forcible Lan-
" guage, what *Room* there is *in His very Heart* for
" me! May I know *what it is*, to have *my whole Heart*
" *subdued by Love*; so subdued, as to be *crucified with*
" *Him* (b); to be *dead to Sin*, and dead to the World,
" *but alive unto GOD thro' Jesus Christ* (c)! In His
" *Power* and *Love* may I *confide*; *to Him* may I with-
" out any Reserve *commit my Spirit! His Image* may I
" bear! *His Laws* may I observe! *His Service* may I
" pursue! And may I remain, thro' Time and
" Eternity, *a Monument* of the *Efficacy of His Grace*
" and *a Trophy* of *His victorious Grace!*

" Oh Blessed GOD! If there be *any Thing* wanting
" wards constituting me *a sincere Christian*, discover
" to me, and work it in me! *Beat down*, I beseech
" Thee, *every false* and *presumptuous Hope*, how-
" soever *that Building* may have been which is thus
" *in Ruins*, and how *proud* soever I may have been

(x) Psal. lxxviii. 20. (y) John. xvi. 8. (z) Hos. xiii.
(a) John xvi. 15. (b) Rom. vi. 6. (c) Rom. vi.

vain Ornaments! Let me know *the worſt of my Caſe*, be *that Knowledge* ever ſo *diſtreſsful*; and if there be *remaining Danger*, Oh let my Heart be *fully ſenſible of it*, ſenſible *while yet there is Remedy!*

" If there be *any ſecret Sin* yet lurking in my Soul, which I have not ſincerely renounced, *diſcover it to me*, and *rend it out of my Heart*, tho' it ſhould have *ſhot its Roots ever ſo deep*, and ſhould have *wrap'd them all around it*, ſo that *every Nerve* ſhould be *pained* by the Separation! *Tear it away*, Oh Lord, by a Hand *graciouſly ſevere!* And *by Degrees*, yea, Lord, *by ſpeedy Advances*, go on, I beſeech Thee, to *perfect what is* ſtill *lacking in my Faith* (d)! Accompliſh in me *all the good Pleaſure of Thy Goodneſs* (e): Inrich me, Oh Heavenly Father, with *all the Graces of Thy Spirit*: Form me to *the compleat Image of Thy dear Son*: And then, for His Sake, *come unto me, and manifeſt Thy gracious Preſence in my Soul* (f), till it is *ripened for that State of Glory*, for which *all theſe Operations* are intended to *prepare it!* Amen!

(d) 1 Theſſ. iii. 10. (e) 2 Theſſ. i. 11. (f) John xiv. 23.

CHAP. XIV.

A more particular View of the seven Branches of the CHRISTIAN TEMPER, by which the Reader may be further assisted, in judging what he is, and what he should endeavour to be. †

The Importance of the Case engages to a more particular Survey, what Manner of Spirit we are of. §. 1, 2. *Accordingly the Christian Temper is described,* (I.) *In some general Views of it, as a New and Divine Temper,* §. 3. *As resembling that of Christ,* §. 4. *As engaging us to be spiritually-minded, and to live by Faith.* §. 5. *A Plan of the Remainder:* §. 6. *In which the Christian Temper is more particularly considered,* (II.) *With Regard to the Blessed GOD, including Fear, Affection, and Obedience,* §. 7. *Faith and Love to Christ,* §. 8, 9. *Joy in Him,* §. 10. *And a proper Temper toward the Holy Spirit, particularly as a Spirit of Adoption, and of Comfort,* §. 11,—13. (III.) *With Regard to ourselves, as including Preference of the Soul to the Body, Humility, Purity,* §. 14. *Temperance,* §. 15. *Contentedness,* §. 16. *And Patience.* §. 17. (IV.) *With Regard to our Fellow Creatures, as including Love,* §. 18. *Meekness,* §. 19. *Peaceableness,* §. 20. *Mercifulness,* §. 21.

† N. B. *This Chapter* is almost *an Abridgment* of that excellent Book of *Dr. Evans*, intitled, *The Christian Temper*, to which it relates to the Description of it. For *particular Arguments*, to enforce each Part of *this Temper*, I must refer the Reader to the Book itself.

§. 21. *Truth*, §. 22. *And Candour in judging.* §. 23. (V.) *General Qualifications of each Branch:* §. 24. *Such as Sincerity*, §. 25. *Conſtancy*, §. 26. *Tenderneſs*, §. 27. *Zeal*, §. 28. *And Prudence.* §. 29. *Theſe Things ſhould frequently be recollected.* §. 30. *A Review of all in a Scriptural Prayer.*

1. WHEN I conſider *the infinite Importance of Eternity*, I find it *exceedingly difficult to ſatisfy myſelf* in any Thing which I can ſay to Men, where *their Eternal Intereſts* are *concerned.* I have given you *a View*, I hope I may truly ſay, *a juſt*, as well as *faithful View*, of a truly *Chriſtian Temper* already. Yet for your farther Aſſiſtance, I would offer it to your Conſideration *in various Points of Light*, that you may be aſſiſted *in judging* of *what you are*, and of *what you ought to be.* And in this *I aim*, not only at *your Conviction*, if you are *yet a Stranger* to real *Religion*, but at *your further Edification*, if by the Grace of GOD you are at this Time *experimentally acquainted with it.* Happy will you be, *happy beyond Expreſſion*, if as you go on from *one Article* to *another*, you can ſay, "This is *my Temper* and *Character.*" Happy *in no inconſiderable Degree*, if you can ſay, "This is what *I deſire*, what *I pray for*, and what *I purſue*, in Preference to every oppoſite View, *tho' it be not* what *I have as yet attained.*"

§. 2. SEARCH then, and try, *what Manner of Spirit you are of* (a). And may *He that ſearcheth all Hearts* direct the Enquiry, and enable you *ſo to judge yourſelf*, *that you may not be condemned of the Lord* (b)!

§. 3. KNOW in the general, that if you are *a Chriſtian indeed*, you have been *renewed in the Spirit of your Mind* (c); ſo renewed, as to be *regenerate*, and *born again.* It is *not enough*, to have aſſumed *a new Name*, to have been brought under *ſome new Reſtraints*, or to have made *a partial Change* in ſome Particulars of your Conduct. *The Change* muſt be *great* and *univerſal.* Inquire then, whether you have entertained *new Apprehenſions of Things*, have formed *a practical Judgment* different

(a) Luke ix. 55. (b) 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. (c) Eph. iv. 23.

different from what you formerly did; whether *the End* you propose, *the Affections* which you feel working in your Heart, and *the Course of Action* to which by those Affections you are directed, be on the whole *New* or *Old?* ... Again, if you are *a Christian indeed*, you are *Partaker of a Divine Nature* (d); Divine in its *Original*, its *Tendency*, and its *Resemblance*. Enquire therefore, whether GOD hath implanted *a Principle in your Heart*, which *tends to him*, and which *makes you like him*. Search *your Soul* attentively, to see if you have really *the Image* there *of GOD's Moral Perfections*, of *His Holiness* and *Righteousness*, *His Goodness* and *Fidelity*; for *the New Man is after GOD created in Righteousness and true Holiness* (e), and *is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of Him that created him* (f).

§. 4. For your farther Assistance enquire, whether *the same Mind be in you which was also in Christ* (g); whether you bear *the Image* of *GOD's Incarnate Son*, the brightest and fairest Resemblance of *the Father*, which Earth or Heaven has ever beheld? The Blessed *Jesus* designed himself to be *a Model* for all his Followers; and he is certainly *a Model* most fit for our Imitation: *An Example* in our own Nature, and in Circumstances adapted to general Use; *an Example*, recommended to us at once by its *spotless Perfection*, and by the *endearing Relations* in which he stands to us, as *our Master*, *our Friend*, and *our Head*; as the Person by whom *our everlasting State* is to be *fixed*, and in *a Resemblance* to whom *our final Happiness* is to *consist*, if ever we are *happy at all*. Look then into *the Life* and *Temper* of *Christ*, as described and illustrated *in the Gospels*, and search whether you can find *any Thing like it* in your *own Life*. Have you any Thing of *His Devotion*, *Love*, and *Resignation to GOD?* Any Thing of *His Humility*, *Meekness*, and *Benevolence to Men?* Any Thing of *His Purity* and *Wisdom*, His *Contempt of the World*, His *Patience*, His *Fortitude*, His *Zeal?* And indeed *all the other Branches* of the *Christian Temper*, which do not imply *previous Guilt* in the Person by whom

(d) 2 Pet. i. 4. (e) Eph. iv. 24. (f) Col. iii. 10.
(g) Phil. ii. 5.

m they are exerciſed, may be *attended to in your* uiries under this Head.

. 5. LET me add, If you are *a Chriſtian*, you are the main *ſpiritually-minded*, as knowing *that is* e *and Peace*; whereas *to be carnally-minded is* ath (h). Tho' you *live in the Fleſh*, you *will not* r *after it* (i); you will not *take your Orders*, and r *Commands* from it. You will indeed *attend to its* eſſary *Intereſts*, as *Matter of Duty*; but it will ſtill with Regard to *another* and *a nobler Intereſt*, that of *Rational and Immortal Spirit*. Your *Thoughts*, your ections, your *Purſuits*, your *Choice* will be *determined* a *Regard to Things Spiritual*, rather than *Carnal*.— a Word, you will *walk by Faith*, and *not by Sight* (k). ture, *inviſible*, and in ſome Degree *incomprehenſible* jects will *take up your Mind*. Your *Faith* will act on *Being* of GOD, His *Perfections*, His *Providences*, *Precepts*, His *Threatnings*, and His *Promiſes*. It l act upon *Chriſt*, *whom having not ſeen*, you will e and honour (l). It will act on *that unſeen World*, ich it knows to be *Eternal*, and therefore infinitely re worthy of your affectionate Regard, than any of *ſe Things which are ſeen*, and are *Temporal* (m).

§. 6. THESE are *general Views* of the *Chriſtian Temper*, which I would intreat you to *examine yourſelf*; and w I would *go on* to lead you into *a Survey*, of the *grand anches of it*, as relating to *GOD*, *our Neighbour*, d *ourſelves*; and of *thoſe Qualifications*, which muſt end *each of theſe Branches*, ſuch as *Sincerity*, *Con-ncy*, *Tenderneſs*, *Zeal*, and *Prudence*. And I beg r *diligent Attention*, while I lay before you *a few* ints with Regard to *each*, by which you may *judge the* tter, both of *your State*, and *your Duty*.

§. 7. EXAMINE then, I intreat you, *the Temper of r Heart*, with Regard to *the Bleſſed GOD*. Do you d there *a reverential Fear*, and *a ſupream Love* and neration for His incomparable Excellencies, *an Af-ion to Him* as the Higheſt Good, and *a cordial Grati-de towards Him* as your Supream Benefactor? Can u *truſt His Care*? Can you *credit His Teſtimony*? Do

(h) Rom. viii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 8. (i) 2 Cor. x. 3. (k) 2 Cor. v. 7. (m) 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Do you desire to pay *an unreserved Obedience* to all that he commands, and *an humble Submission* to all the Disposals of His Providence? Do you *design His Glory* as your noblest End, and make it *the great Business of your Life* to *approve yourself to Him*? Is it *your governing Care* to *imitate Him*, and to *serve Him in Spirit and in Truth* (n)?

§. 8. FAITH *in Christ* I have already *described at large*; and therefore shall say nothing farther, either of *that Persuasion of His Power and Grace*, which is the great Foundation of it, or of *that Acceptance of Christ* under all His Characters, or *that Surrender of the Soul* into His Hands, in which its peculiar and distinguishing Nature consists.

§. 9. IF this *Faith in Christ* be sincere, it will undoubtedly produce *a Love to Him*; which will express itself, in *affectionate Thoughts* of Him; in *strict Fidelity* to Him; in a *careful Observation* of His Charge; in a *Regard* to *His Spirit*, to *His Friends*, and to *His Interests*; in a *Reverence* to the *Memorials of His dying Love*, which he has instituted; and in an *ardent Desire* after *that Heavenly World* where *he dwells*, and where he will at length *have all His People* to *dwell with Him* (o).

§. 10. I MAY add, agreeably to the Word of GOD, that thus *believing in Christ*, and *loving Him*, you will also *rejoice in Him*; in His *glorious Design*, and in His *compleat Fitness to accomplish it*, in the *Promises of His Word*, and in the *Privileges of His People*. It will be a *Matter of Joy to you*, that *such a Redeemer* has appeared in this World of ours; and *your Joy for yourselves* will be *proportionable* to the Degree of Clearness, with which you discern *your Interest in Him*, and *Relation to Him*.

§. 11. LET me farther lead you into some Reflections on *the Temper of your Heart* towards *the Blessed Spirit*. If we *have not the Spirit of Christ*, we are *none of His* (p). If we are not *led by the Spirit of GOD*, we are not *the Children of GOD* (q.) You will think if you are *a real Christian*, desire that you may be *full*

(n) John iv. 24. (o) John xvii. 24. (p) Rom. viii. 9. (q) Rom. viii. 14.

ith the Spirit (r); that you may have every Power of ur Soul *subject to His Authority*; that *His Agency on r Heart* may be more constant, more operative, and re delightful. And to cherish *these sacred Influences*, u will often have Recourse to *serious Consideration* and *ditation*: You will abstain from *those Sins*, which d to *grieve Him*: You will improve *the tender Sea-*, in which He seems to *breathe upon your Soul*: You ll strive earnestly with GOD *in Prayer*, that you y have Him *shed on you* still more *abundantly thro'* *us Christ* (s): And you will be desirous to fall in h *the great End of His Mission*, which was *to glorify rist* (t), and to *establish His Kingdom*. —— You will re *His Influences* as *the Spirit of Adoption*, to render *Acts of Worship* free and affectionate, *your Obedience* orous, *your Sorrow for Sin* overflowing and tender, *Resignation* meek, and *your Love* ardent; in a Word, carry you thro' Life and Death, with *the Temper of hild*, who delights in *his Father*, and who longs for more immediate Presence.

. 12. ONCE more, If you are *a Christian indeed*, will be desirous to obtain *the Spirit of Courage*. A- ft all that *Humility of Soul* to which you will be form- you will wish to commence *a Hero in the Cause of st*, opposing *with a vigorous Resolution* the strongest rts of *the Powers of Darkness*, the inward Corrup- of *your own Heart*, and all *the outward Difficulties* may meet with in the Way of your Duty, while e *Cause* and *in the Strength of Christ* you go on *con- ing and to conquer*.

13. ALL these Things may be considered as *ches of Godliness*; of *that Godliness*, which is *table unto all Things*, and hath *the Promise of the which now is, and of that which is to come* (u).

14. LET me now farther lay before you *some ches* of *the Christian Temper*, which relate more diately to *ourselves*. And here, if you are *a Christ- indeed*, you will undoubtedly *prefer the Soul to the* and *Things Eternal to those that are Temporal*.

Conscious

(r) Eph. v. 18. (s) Tit. iii. 6. (t) John. xvi. 14.
(u) 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Conſcious of the Dignity and Value of *your Im-mortal Part*, you will come to a firm Reſolution to *ſe-cure its Happineſs*, whatever is to be *reſigned*, whatever is to be *endured* in that View.——If you are *a real Chriſtian*, you will be alſo *clothed with Humility* (x). You will have *a deep Senſe* of your own *Imperfections*, both *Natural*, and *Moral*; of the *ſhort Extent* of your *Knowledge*; of the *Uncertainty* and *Weakneſs* of your *Reſolutions*; and of your *continual Dependance* upon GOD, and upon almoſt *every Thing* about you. And eſpecially, you will be *deeply ſenſible* of your Guilt, the Remembrance of which will *fill you* with *Shame* and *Confuſion*, even when you have ſome Reaſon to *hope it is forgiven*. This will forbid *all Haughtineſs* and *Inſolence*, in your Behaviour to *your Fellow-Creatures*. It will teach you, under *afflictive Providences*, with *holy Submiſſion* to *bear the Indignation of the Lord*, to thoſe that know they *have ſinned againſt Him* (y).—Again, If you are *a Chriſtian indeed*, you will labour after *Purity of Soul*, and maintain *a fixed Abhorrence* of all prohibited *ſenſual Indulgence*. A Recollection of *Impurities* will *fill you* with *Shame* and *Grief*; and you will endeavour *for the future* to *guard* your *Thoughts*, *Deſires*, as well as your *Words* and *Actions*, and to *abſtain*, not only *from the Commiſſion of Evil*, but *from the* diſtant *Appearance* and probable Occaſions *of it*; as conſcious of the *perfect Holineſs* of that GOD with whom you converſe, and of the *purifying Nature* of that *Hope* (a), which by *His Goſpel* he hath taught you to entertain.

§. 15. WITH this is nearly allied that amiable Vir-tue of *Temperance*; which will teach you to guard againſt *ſuch a Uſe* of *Meats* and *Drinks*, as *indiſpoſes the Body* for the Service of the Soul; or *ſuch an Indulgence* in either, as will *rob you* of that precious Jewel, *Time*, or *occaſion an Expence* beyond what *your Circumſtances* will *admit*, and beyond what will conſiſt with thoſe *Liberalities to the Poor*, which *your Relation to their* to GOD and each other will require. In ſhort you will *guard* againſt whatever has a Tendency to

(x) 1 Pet. v. 5. (y) Mich. vii. 9. (z) 1 Theſſ.
(a) 1 John iii. 3.

ſe a ſenſual Diſpoſition, againſt whatever would *alie-* *the Soul* from Communion with GOD, and would *iniſh its Zeal* and *Activity* in His Service.

. 16. THE Divine Philoſophy of the Bleſſed *Jeſus* l alſo teach you *a contented Temper*. It will *moderate* *Deſires* of thoſe *worldly Enjoyments*, after which y feel *ſuch an inſatiable Thirſt*, ever growing with lulgence and Succeſs. You will *guard* againſt an *im-* *derate Care* about thoſe Things, which would lead into a *Forgetfulneſs* of your *Heavenly Inheritance*. Providence *diſappoint your Undertakings*, you will *mit*. If *others* be *more proſperous*, you *will not envy* ; but rather *will be thankful* for what GOD is ſed to *beſtow upon them*, as well as for what he *gives* No *unlawful Methods* will be *uſed*, to *alter your ent Condition* ; and whatever it is, you will endea- to *make the beſt of it* ; remembring, it is what *In-* *e Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs* have *appointed you*, and that beyond all Compariſon *better than you have deſerv-* yea, that the very *Deficiencies* and *Inconveniences of* ay conduce to *the Improvement* of *your future* and pleat *Happineſs*.

. 17. WITH *Contentment*, if you are *a Diſciple of* *iſt*, you will join *Patience* too, and *in Patience will* *ſs your Souls* (b). You cannot indeed be *quite* [redacted] *ible*, either of *Afflictions*, or of [redacted] d will be *calm* and *compoſed* under them, and *ſteady* he Proſecution of *proper Duty*, tho' *Afflictions* preſs, tho' your *Hopes*, your *deareſt Hopes*, and *Proſpects* delayed. *Patience* will prevent *haſty* and *raſh Con-* *ns*, and fortify you againſt ſeeking *irregular Me-* *s of Relief* ; diſpoſing you in the mean Time, till D ſhall be pleaſed to appear for you, to *go on ſteadily* e Way of your Duty, *committing yourſelf to Him* *ell-doing* (c). You will alſo be careful, that *Pa-* e may *have its perfect Work* (d), and *prevail* in portion to thoſe Circumſtances which demand *its pe-* *r Exerciſe*. For Inſtance, when *the Succeſſions of* are *long* and *various*, ſo that *Deep calls to Deep*, *all GOD's Waves and Billows* ſeem to be *going*

Luke xxi. 19. (c) 1 Pet. iv. 19. (d) Jam. i. 4.

over you one after another (e); when GOD *touches* in the *moſt tender Part*; when the *Reaſons of His* C *duct to you* are quite *unaccountable*; when your *natu Spirits* are *weak* and *decayed*; when *unlawful Met of Redreſs* ſeem *near* and *eaſy*; ſtill *your Reverence* the *Will* of your *Heavenly Father* will *carry it eq all*, and keep you *waiting quietly for Deliverance* in own Time and Way.

N. B. *If this Chapter ſeem too long to be read once, it may properly be divided here.*

§. 18. I HAVE thus led you into a brief Review *the Chriſtian Temper*, with Reſpect to *GOD*, and *ſelves*: Permit me now to add, that *the Goſpel* will te you *another Set of very important Leſſons* with Reſp to *your Fellow-Creatures*. They are all *ſummed up* this, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf* (f); *whatſoever thou wouldeſt* (that is, whatſoever thou co in an Exchange of Circumſtances fairly and reaſona deſire,) *that others ſhould do unto thee, do thou like the ſame unto them* (g). The *Religion* of the Bl *Jeſus*, when it triumphs in your Soul, will conquer Predominancy of *an irregular Self-Love*, and will *you* candidly and tenderly to *look upon your Neighbo another Self*. As you are *ſenſible of your own Rights*, will be *ſenſible of His*; as you *ſupport your own Cha ter*, you will *ſupport His*. You will *deſire his Welf* and be ready to *relieve his Neceſſity*, as you would *your own* conſulted *by another*. You will *put the kin Conſtruction* upon his *dubious Words* and *Actions*. will *take Pleaſure in His Happineſs*, you will *feel Diſtreſs*, in ſome Meaſure *as your own*. And moſt py will you be, when *this obvious Rule* is familia your Mind, when *this golden Law* is *written upon Heart*; and when it is habitually and impartially *ſulted by you*, upon every Occaſion, whether gre ſmall.

§. 19. THE *Goſpel* will alſo teach you to *put on* neſs (h), not only *with Reſpect to GOD*, ſubmiſſ

(e) Pſal. xlii. 7. (f) Rom. xiii. 9. (g) Mat. (h) Col. iii. 12.

Authority of His Word, and the *Diſpoſal of His Provi-*
ce, as was urged before; but alſo *with Regard to your Bre-*
n of Mankind. Its gentle Inſtructions will form you
Calmneſs of Temper under *Injuries* and *Provocations*, ſo
t you may *not be angry* without, or beyond *juſt Cauſe*.
will engage you to *guard your Words*, leſt you *provoke*
exaſperate thoſe, you ſhould rather *ſtudy* by Love *to*
n, and by Tenderneſs *to heal*. *Meekneſs* will render
ſlow in uſing any *rough and violent Methods*, if they
by any Means be lawfully avoided; and *ready to ad-*
, and even to *propoſe a Reconciliation*, after they have
n entered into, if there may yet be *Hope of ſucceeding*.
far as *this Branch* of the *Chriſtian Temper* prevails
your Heart, you will take Care to *avoid every Thing*,
ich might *give unneceſſary Offence* to others; you will
ave yourſelf *in a modeſt Manner*, according to your
tion; and it will *work*, both with Regard to *Supe-*
rs and *Inferiors*; teaching you *duly to honour the one*,
not to overbear or *oppreſs*, to *grieve* or *inſult the*
r. And *in Religion itſelf*, it will reſtrain *all immode-*
Sallies and *harſh Cenſures*, and will command down
Wrath of Man, which *inſtead of working*, ſo often
ſes the Righteouſneſs of GOD (i), and ſhames and
unds *that good Cauſe*, in which it is boiſterouſly and
ouſly engaged.

. 20. WITH this is naturally connected *a peaceful Diſ-*
ſition. If you are *a Chriſtian indeed*, you will have
a Value and Eſteem *for Peace*, as to endeavour to
ain, and to *preſerve* it, *as much as lieth in you* (k),
much as you *fairly* and *honourably* can. This will
e ſuch an Influence upon your Conduct, as to make
, not only *cautious of giving Offence*, and *ſlow in*
ing it, but earneſtly *deſirous to regain Peace* as ſoon as
y be, *when it is* in any Meaſure *broken*; that *the*
und may be *healed*, while it is *green*, and before it
ins to rankle and feſter. And more eſpecially *this*
poſition will engage you, *to keep the Unity of the Spi-*
in the Bond of Peace (l), *with all that in every Place*
on the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (m); whom

(i) Jam. i. 20. (k) Rom. xii. 18. (l) Eph. iv. 3.
1 Cor. i. 2.

if you truly love, you will also *love all those*, whom you have Reason to believe to be *His Disciples* and Servants.

§. 21. If you be *yourselves* indeed *of that Number*, you will also *put on Bowels of Mercy* (n). The Mercies of *GOD*, and those of the Blessed *Redeemer*, will work on your Heart, to *mould it* to Sentiments of Compassion and *Generosity*, so that you will *feel the Wants* and *Sorrows of others*; you will desire to *relieve their Necessities*; and *as you have Opportunity*, you will *do Good* both to *their Bodies* and *their Souls*, expressing your *kind Affections* in *suitable Actions*, which may both evidence their Sincerity, and render them effectual.

§. 22. As *a Christian*, you will also maintain *Truth* inviolable, not only *in your solemn Testimonies*, when confirmed by *an Oath*, but likewise *in common Conversation*. You will remember too, that *your Promises* bring *an Obligation upon you*, which you are by no Means at *Liberty to break thro'*. On the whole, you will be careful *to keep a strict Correspondence* between *your Words* and *your Actions*, in such a Manner as becomes *a Servant of the GOD of Truth*.

§. 23. Once more, As amidst *the strictest Care to observe all the Divine Precepts*, you will still find many *Imperfections*, on Account of which you will be obliged to *pray*, that *GOD would not enter into* strict *Judgment with you*, as well knowing *that in His Sight no Man can be justified* (o); you will be careful *not to judge others*, in such a Manner as should awaken the Severity of *His Judgment against yourself* (p). You will not, therefore, judge them *pragmatically*, that is, when you have nothing to do with their Actions; nor *rashly*, without enquiring into Circumstances; nor *partially*, without weighing them attentively and fairly; nor *uncharitably*, putting the worst Construction upon Things of their own Nature dubious, deciding upon Intentions or evil farther than they certainly appear to be so, pronouncing on Men's State or on the whole of their Character from any particular Action, and involving the Innocent with the Guilty. There is *a Moderation* contrary to all these Extreams, which *the Gospel recommends*

(n) Col. iii. 12. (o) Psal. cxliii. 2. (p) Mat. vii. 1,

nd if you *receive the Gospel* in good earnest *into your Heart*, it will *lay the Axe to the Root* of such Evils as these.

§. 24. HAVING thus briefly illustrated *the principal branches* of the *Christian Temper* and *Character*, I shall conclude the Representation, with reminding you of *some general Qualifications*, which must be *mingled with all*, and *give a Tincture to each of them*; such as, *Sincerity, Constancy, Tenderness, Zeal*, and *Prudence*.

§. 25. ALWAYS remember, that *Sincerity* is the *very Soul* of *true Religion*. A *single Intention* to *please GOD*, and to *approve ourselves to Him*, must animate and govern *all that we do in it*. Under the Influence of *this Principle*, you will impartially enquire into *every Estimation of Duty*, and apply to *the Practice of it* so far as it is known to you. *Your Heart* will be *engaged* in all you do. *Your Conduct in Private* and *in Secret*, will be *agreeable* to your *most publick Behaviour*. A Sense of the Divine Authority will teach you, to *esteem all GOD's Precepts concerning all Things to be right*, and to *hate every false Way* (q).

§. 26. THUS are you *in Simplicity and godly Sincerity to have your Conversation in the World* (r). And you are also to charge it upon your Soul, to be *stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord* (s). There must not only be *some sudden Fits* and *Starts* of *Devotion*, or of something which looks like it; but *Religion* must be *an habitual* and *permanent Thing*. There must be *a Purpose* to *adhere to it at all Times*. It must be made *the stated* and *ordinary Business* of Life. *Deliberate* and *presumptuous Sins* must be *carefully avoided*; a *Guard* must be *maintained* against *the common Infirmities* of Life; and *Falls* of one Kind or another must be *Matter* of *proportionable Humiliation* before GOD, and must occasion *renewed Resolution* for His Service. And thus you are to go on *to the End of your Life*, not discouraged by the Length and Difficulty of the Way, nor *allured* on the one Hand, or *terrified* on the other, by all the various *Temptations* which may surround and assault you. *Your Soul* must be *fixed* on *this Basis*, and you are *still to behave your-*

(q) Psal. cxix. 128. (r) 2 Cor. i. 12. (s) 1 Cor. xv. 58.

ſelf as one who knows he ſerves *an unchangeable* GOD, and who expects from Him *a Kingdom which cannot be moved* (t).

§. 27. AGAIN, So far as *the Goſpel prevails* in your Heart, *your Spirit* will be *tender*, and *the Stone* will be *transformed into Fleſh*. You will deſire, that *your Apprehenſion of Divine Things* may be quick, *your Affections* ready to take proper Impreſſions, *your Conſcience* always eaſily touched, and on the whole, *your Reſolutions* pliant to the Divine Authority, and cordially willing to be, and to do, whatever GOD ſhall appoint. You will have *a tender Regard* to the Word of GOD, *a tender Caution* againſt Sin, *a tender Guard* againſt the Snares of Proſperity, *a tender Submiſſion* to GOD's afflicting Hand: In a Word, you will be *tender*, where-ever *the Divine Honour* is *concerned*; and *careful*, neither *to do any Thing yourſelf*, nor *to allow any Thing in another*, as far as you can influence, by which GOD ſhould be *offended*, or *Religion reproached*.

§. 28. NAY more than all this, You will, ſo far as *true Chriſtianity* governs in your Mind, *exert an holy Zeal* in the Service of *your Redeemer* and *your Father*. You will be *zealouſly affected in every good Thing* (u), in Proportion to its apprehended Goodneſs and Importance. You will be *zealous* eſpecially, *to correct* what is *irregular in yourſelves*, and *to act* to the utmoſt of your Ability *for the Cauſe of* GOD. Nor will you be able *to look with an indifferent Eye* on the *Conduct of others* in this View; but ſo far as *Charity*, *Meekneſs*, and *Prudence* will admit, you will *teſtify your Diſapprobation* of every Thing in it, which is *diſhonourable to* GOD, and *injurious to Men*. And you will *labour*, not only to reclaim *Men from ſuch Courſes*, but to *engage them to Religion*, and to *quicken them in it*.

§. 29. AND once more, You will deſire to uſe that *Prudence* which GOD hath given you, *in judging what* is, in preſent Circumſtances, *your Duty to* GOD, *your Neighbour*, and *yourſelf*; what will be, on the whole, *the moſt acceptable Manner of diſcharging it*, and how it may be *moſt advantagiouſly purſued*; as remembering that *He is* indeed *the wiſeſt* and *the happieſt Man*,

(t) Heb. xii. 28. (u) Gal. iv. 18.

constant Attention of Thought *discovers the greatest Opportunities of doing Good*, and with ardent and animat- Resolution *breaks thro' every Opposition*, that he may *prove those Opportunities.*

§. 30. THIS is such a View of *the Christian Temper*, could conveniently be thrown within such narrow Li- its; and I hope, it may *assist many* in the great and portant Work of *Self-Examination*. Let *your own conscience answer*, how far you have *already attained*, and how far you *desire it*; and let *the principal To-cks* here touched upon *be fixed* in *your Memory*, and in *r Heart*, that you may be *mentioning them* before OD *in your daily Addresses to the Throne of Grace*, order to receive from Him *all necessary Assistances* for inging them *into Practice.*

PRAYER, *chiefly in Scripture Language, in which the several Branches of the* Christian Temper *are more briefly enumerated, in the Order laid down above.*

BLESSED GOD, I humbly adore Thee, as the great *Father of Lights*, and *the Giver of every good, and every perfect Gift* (x). From Thee therefore I seek *every Blessing*, and especially *those*, which may *lead me to Thyself*, and *prepare me for the Eternal Enjoyment of Thee.* I adore Thee, as *the* GOD, who *searches the Hearts, and tries the Reins* of the Children of Men (y). *Search me, Oh GOD, and know my Heart; try me, and know my Thoughts: See if there be any wicked Way in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting* (z). May I know *what Manner of Spirit I am of* (a), and be *preserved from mis-taking*, where *the Error* might be *infinitely fatal!*

" May I, Oh Lord, *be renewed in the Spirit of my Mind* (b)! *A new Heart* do Thou *give me, and a new Spirit* do Thou *put within me* (c)! Make me *Partaker of a Divine Nature* (d); and *as He who hath called me is Holy*, may I *be holy in all Manner*

" *of*

(x) Jam. i. 17. Luke ix. 55. 2 Pet. i. 4. (y) Jer. xvii. 10. (b) Eph. iv. 23. (z) Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. (c) Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

" *of Converſation* (e)! May *the ſame Mind be in me,*
" *which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus* (f); and may I *ſo walk*
" *even as He walked* (g)! Deliver me from being *carnally-minded, which is Death*; and make me *ſpiritually-minded*, ſince *that is Life and Peace* (h)! And
" may I, while I paſs thro' this World of Senſe, *walk*
" *by Faith*, and *not by Sight* (i), and be *ſtrong in Faith,*
" *giving Glory to GOD* (k)!

" May *Thy Grace*, Oh Lord, *which hath appeared*
" *unto all Men*, and appeared *to me*, with ſuch glori-
" ous Evidence and Luſtre, effectually *teach me* to *deny*
" *Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts*, and to *live ſoberly,*
" *righteouſly, and godly* (l)! Work in mine Heart *that*
" *Godlineſs*, which *is profitable unto all Things* (m); and
" teach me, by the Influences of Thy Bleſſed Spirit, to
" *love Thee the Lord my GOD, with all my Heart,*
" *and with all my Soul, and with all my Mind, and*
" *with all my Strength* (n)! May I *yield myſelf unto*
" *Thee, as alive from the Dead* (o); and *preſent my Body*
" *a living Sacrifice, holy, and acceptable in Thy Sight,*
" *which is my moſt reaſonable Service* (p)! May I *entertain* the moſt *faithful* and *affectionate Regards* to
" the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, Thine Incarnate Son, *the Brightneſs of Thy Glory, and the expreſs Image of Thy Perſon* (q)! Tho' I have *not ſeen Him*, may I *love Him*,
" and *in Him, tho' now I ſee Him not, yet believing*,
" may I *rejoice with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory* (r); and may *the Life which I live in the Fleſh*,
" be daily *by the Faith of the Son of GOD* (s)! May I
" *be filled with the Spirit* (t); and may I *be led by it* (u);
" and ſo may it be evident to others, and eſpecially to
" my own Soul, that I am *a Child of GOD*, and an
" *Heir of Glory!* May I *not receive the Spirit of Bondage unto Fear, but the Spirit of Adoption*, whereby I
" may be enabled to *cry, Abba, Father* (x)! May He
" work in me as *the Spirit of Love, and of Power,*
" and

(e) 1 Pet. i. 15. (f) Phil. ii. 5. (g) 1 John ii. 6.
(h) Rom. viii. 6. (i) 2 Cor. v. 7. (k) Rom. iv. 20.
(l) Tit. ii. 11, 12. (m) 1 Tim. iv. 8. (n) Mark xii. 30.
(o) Rom. vi. 13. (p) Rom. xii. 1. (q) Heb. i. 3.
(r) 1 Pet. i. 8. (s) Gal. ii. 20. (t) Eph. v. 18.
(u) Rom. viii. 14. (x) Rom. viii. 15.

and of a Sound Mind (y); that so I may *add to my Faith, Virtue* (z)! May I *be strong, and very courageous* (a), and *quit myself like a Man* (b), and like a *Christian*, in *the Work* to which I am called, and in *that Warfare*, which I had in View, when I *listed under the Banner* of the great *Captain of my Salvation!*

"Teach me, *Oh Lord*, seriously to consider *the Nature of my own Soul*, and to set *a suitable Value upon it!* May I *labour, not only*, or chiefly, *for the Meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to Eternal Life* (c)! May I *humble myself under Thy mighty Hand*, and be *clothed with Humility* (d); decked with *the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which in the Sight of* GOD *is of great Price* (e)! May I be *pure in Heart*, that I *may see* GOD (f); *mortifying my Members which are on the Earth* (g), so that *if a Right Eye offend me*, I may *pluck it out*, and *if a Right Hand offend me*, I may *cut it off* (h)! May I be *temperate in all Things* (i), *content with such Things as I have* (k), and *instructed* to be so *in whatsoever State I am* (l)! May *Patience* also *have its perfect Work* in me, *that I may be* in that Respect *compleat*, and *wanting nothing* (m)!

"FORM me, *Oh Lord*, I beseech Thee, to *a proper Temper toward my Fellow-Creatures!* May I *love my Neighbour as myself* (n); and *whatsoever I would that others should do unto me*, may I also *do the same unto them* (o)! May I *put on Meekness* (p) under the greatest *Injuries* and *Provocations*; and *if it be possible, as much as lieth in me*, may I *live peaceably with all Men* (q)! May I be *merciful, as my Father in Heaven is merciful* (r)! May I *speak the Truth from my Heart* (s); and may I *speak it in Love* (t); guarding

"against

(y) 2 Tim. i. 7.
1 Cor. xvi. 13.
1 Pet. iii. 4.
(z) 2 Pet. i. 5.
(a) Josh. i. 7.
(b) 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
(c) John vi. 27.
(d) 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
(e) Mat. v. 29, 30.
(f) Mat. v. 8.
(g) Col. iii. 5.
(h) Mat. v. 29, 30.
(i) 1 Cor. ix. 25.
(k) Heb. xiii. 5.
Phil. iv. 11.
(l) Jam. i. 4.
(m) Jam. i. 4.
(n) Gal. v. 14.
Mat. vii. 12.
(o) Luke vi. 36.
(p) Col. iii. 12.
(q) Rom. xii. 18.
(r) Psal. xv. 2.
(s) Psal. xv. 2.
(t) Eph. iv. 15.

" againſt every Inſtance of *a cenſorious* and *malignant*
" *Diſpoſition*; and taking Care *not to judge* ſeverely, ſo
" I would *not be judged* (u) with a Severity, which
" *Thou*, Lord, *knoweſt*, and which *mine own Conſcience*
" *knows*, I ſhould not be *able to ſupport!*

" I intreat Thee, *Oh Lord*, to work in me *all thoſe*
" *Qualifications* of *the Chriſtian Temper*, which may
" render it peculiarly *acceptable to Thee*, and may prove
" *ornamental to my Profeſſion* in the World. *Renew*,
" I beſeech Thee, *a right Spirit within me* (x); make
" me *an Iſraelite indeed*, *in whom there is no* allowed
" *Guile* (y)! And while I *feaſt on Chriſt*, as *my Paſ-*
" *ſover ſacrificed for me*, may I *keep the Feaſt* with
" *the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth* (z)!
" Make me, I beſeech Thee, Oh Thou *Almighty*
" and *unchangeable GOD*, *ſtedfaſt and immoveable*,
" *always abounding in Thy Work*, as *knowing that my*
" *Labour in the Lord ſhall not be* finally *in vain* (a)!
" May *my Heart be tender* (b), *eaſily impreſſed* with Thy
" *Word* and *Providences*, *touch'd* with an affectionate
" *Concern for thy Glory*, and *ſenſible of every Impulſe*
" of *Thy Spirit!* May I be *zealous for my GOD* (c),
" with *a Zeal according to Knowledge* (d) and *Cha-*
" *rity* (e); and teach me in Thy Service, to join
" *the Wiſdom of the Serpent* (f), with *the Boldneſs of the*
" *Lion*, and *the Innocence of the Dove!* Thus render
" me, by Thy Grace, *a ſhining Image* of my *dear Redee-*
" *mer*; and at length bring me to wear *the bright Re-*
" *ſemblance* of *His Holineſs* and *His Glory*, in that World
" where He dwells; that I may aſcribe everlaſting Ho-
" nours *to Him*, and *to Thee*, Oh Thou *Father of Mer-*
" *cies*, whoſe invaluable Gift He is, and *to Thine Holy*
" *Spirit*, thro' whoſe gracious Influences, I would
" humbly hope, I may call *Thee my Father*, and
" *Jeſus my Saviour!* Amen.

(u) Mat. vii. 1. (x) Pſal li. 10. (y) John i. 47.
(z) 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. (a) 1 Cor. xv. 58. (b) 2 Kings xxii. 19.
(c) Numb. xxv. 13. (d) Rom. x. 2. (e) 1 Cor. xvi. 14.
(f) Mat. x. 16.

CHAP

CHAP. XV.

The Reader reminded how much he needs the Aſſiſtance of the SPIRIT of GOD, to form him to the Temper deſcribed above, and what Encouragement he has to expect it.

Forward Reſolutions may prove ineffectual: §. 1. *Yet Religion is not to be given up in Deſpair, but Divine Grace ſought.* §. 2. *A general View of its Reality and Neceſſity, from Reaſon,* §. 3. *and Scripture.* §. 4. *The Spirit to be ſought, as the Spirit of Chriſt,* §. 5. *And in that View, the great Strength of the Soul.* §. 6. *The Encouragement there is to hope for the Communication of it.* §. 7. *A concluding Exhortation to pray for it:* §. 8. *And an humble Addreſs to GOD, purſuant to that Exhortation.*

§. 1. I HAVE now laid before you *a Plan* of that *Temper* and *Character*, which the *Goſpel* requires, and which, if you are *a true Chriſtian*, you will deſire and purſue. Surely there is in the very *Deſcription of it* ſomething which muſt powerfully ſtrike every Mind, which has any Taſte for what is truly beautiful and excellent. And I queſtion not, but you, my dear Reader, will feel *ſome Impreſſion of it* upon your Heart. You will immediately form *ſome lively Purpoſe* of endeavouring after it; and perhaps you may imagine, you ſhall certainly and quickly *attain to it*. You ſee how *reaſonable* it is, and what *deſirable Conſequences* neceſſarily

rily attend it, and *the Aſpect* which it bears on your *preſent Enjoyment* and your *future Happineſs*; and therefore *are determined*, you will *act accordingly*. But give me Leave ſeriouſly to remind you, *how many* there have been, (would to GOD that ſeveral of the Inſtances had not happened within the Compaſs of my own perſonal Obſervation!) *whoſe Goodneſs* hath been *like the Morning Cloud, and the early Dew* which ſoon *paſſeth away* (a). There is not Room indeed *abſolutely* to apply the Words of *Joſhua*, taken in the moſt rigorous Senſe, when he ſaid to *Iſrael*, (that he might humble their too haſty and ſanguine Reſolutions,) *You cannot ſerve the Lord* (b): But I will venture to ſay, *You cannot eaſily do it*. Alas, you know not *the Difficulties* you have to break thro'; you know not *the Temptations* which *Satan* will throw in your Way; you know not *how importunate* your *vain* and *ſinful Companions* will be, to draw you back into the Snare you may attempt to break; and above all, you know not *the ſubtile Artifices*, which your own *Corruptions* will practiſe upon you, in order to recover *their Dominion over you*. You think *the Views* you *now have* of Things will be *laſting*; becauſe the *Principles* and *Objects* to which they refer *are ſo*: But perhaps *To-morrow* may *undeceive you*. *To-morrow* may preſent *ſome Trifle* in a new Dreſs, which ſhall *amuſe you* into *a Forgetfulneſs* of all this. Nay perhaps *before you lie down* on your Bed, *the Impreſſions* you now feel *may wear off*. The *corrupt Deſires* of your own Heart, now perhaps *a little charmed down* and lying *as if they were dead*, may *ſpring up again* with new Violence, as if they had *ſlept* only to recruit their Vigour; and if you are not ſupported by *a better Strength than your own*, this *Struggle for Liberty* will only make *your future Chains* the heavier, the more ſhameful, and the more fatal.

§. 2. WHAT then is to be done? Is the convinced Sinner to *lie down in Deſpair?* to ſay, "I am "*helpleſs Captive*, and by exerting myſelf with Vio"lence, may *break my Limbs* ſooner than *my Bonds*, "and increaſe the Evil I would remove." *GOD forbid*

(a) Hoſ. vi. 4. (b) Joſh. xxiv. 19.

rbid! You cannot, I am persuaded, be *so little ac-*
ainted with Christianity, as not to know, that *the*
octrine of Divine Assistances bears a very considerable
art in it. You have often, I doubt not, read of *the*
aw of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, as *making*
free from the Law of Sin and Death (c); and have
een told, that *thro' the Spirit* we *mortify the Deeds of*
he Body (d): You have read of *doing all Things thro'*
hrist who strengtheneth us; (e); whose *Grace is suffi-*
ient for us, and whose *Strength is made perfect in*
Vakness (f). Permit me, therefore, now to call down
ur Attention to this, as a Truth of the cleareſt Evi-
ence, and the utmoſt Importance.

§. 3. REASON indeed, as well as the whole Tenor
Scripture, agrees with this. The whole *created*
Vorld has *a neceſſary Dependance* on GOD: *From*
im even *the Knowledge of Natural Things* is *deriv-*
(g), and *Skill in them* is to be *aſcribed to Him* (h).
uch more loudly does ſo great and excellent a Work,
the new-forming the Human Mind, beſpeak its *Divine*
uthor. When you conſider, *how various* the Branches of
e Chriſtian Temper are, and *how contrary* many of them
o are *to that Temper*, which hath prevailed in your
eart, and governed your Life in Time paſt; you muſt
lly ſee *Divine Influences as neceſſary* to produce and
uriſh them, as the *Influences of the Sun* and *Rain*
to call up the Variety of Plants, and Flowers, and
ain, and Fruits, by which the Earth is adorned, and
Life ſupported. You will be yet *more ſenſible of*
s, if you reflect on *the violent Oppoſition* which this
ppy Work muſt expect to meet with, of which I
ll preſently warn you more largely, and which if
have not *already experienced*, it muſt be becauſe
have but *very lately begun* to think of *Religion*.

§. 4. ACCORDINGLY, if you give yourſelf Leave
onſult Scripture on this Head, (and if you would *live*
a Chriſtian, you muſt be conſulting it *every Day*,
forming your Notions and Actions by it;) you will
that *the whole Tenor of it* teaches *that Dependance*
GOD, which I am now recommending. You will

 particularly

) Rom. viii. 2. (d) Rom. viii. 13. (e) Phil. iv. 13.
2 Cor. xii. 9. (g) Pſal. xciv. 10. (h) Exod. xxxi. 3, 6.

particularly ſee, that *the Production of Religion* in
Soul is *Matter of Divine Promiſe*; that when it has
effected, *Scripture* aſcribes it to *a Divine Agency*;
that *the Increaſe of Grace and Piety* in the Heart of
who are truly regenerate, is alſo ſpoken of as *the W*
of GOD, who *begins* and *carries it on until the Da*
Jeſus Chriſt (i).

§. 5. In Conſequence of *all theſe Views*, lay it
to yourſelf as *a moſt certain Principle*, that *no Attempt*
Religion is to be made *in your own Strength*. If you
get this, and GOD purpoſes finally to ſave you, he
humble you by repeated Diſappointments, 'till he *teach*
better. You will be *aſhamed* of one Scheme and Eff
and of another, till you *ſettle upon the true Baſis*.
will alſo probably ſhew you, not only in the general,
your Strength is to be *derived from Heaven*; but
cularly, that it is *the Office of the Bleſſed Spirit*, to
fy the Heart, and to invigorate holy Reſolutions; and
that *in all theſe Operations* he is to be conſidered as
Spirit of Chriſt, working under his Direction, and
vital Communication from Him, under the Characte
the great *Head of the Church*, the grand *Treaſurer*
Diſpenſer of theſe holy and beneficial Influences.
which Account it is called *the Supply of the Spirit of*
ſus Chriſt (k), who is *exalted at the Right Hand* of
Father, *to give Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins* (l);
whoſe Grace alone we can be *ſtrong* (m), and *of*
Fulneſs we receive, even Grace for Grace (n).

§. 6. Resolve therefore *ſtrenuouſly* for the Servic
GOD, and for the Care of your Soul; but *reſolve*
deſtly and *humbly*. *Even the Youths ſhall faint and*
weary, and the young Men utterly fail; but they who
on the Lord, are the Perſons who *renew their Strength*
When a Soul is almoſt *afraid to declare* in the Preſenc
the Lord, that *it will not do this*, or *that*, which has
merly offended him; when it is *afraid* abſolutely *to*
miſe, that *it will perform this*, or *that Duty*, with
gour and Conſtancy; but only expreſſes *its humble*
neſt Deſire, that it may *by Grace be enabled*, to *avoid*
one, or *purſue the other*: Then, ſo far as my Obſerv

(i) Phil. i. 6. (k) Phil. i. 19. (l) Acts
(m) 2 Tim. ii. 1. (n) John i. 16. (o) Iſai. xl.

r Experience have reached, *it is in the beſt Way* to learn *e happy Art* of conquering Temptations, and of diſ-harging Duty.

§. 7. On the other Hand, Let not your *Dependance on this Spirit*, and your *Senſe of your own Weakneſs* nd *Inſufficience* for any Thing *ſpiritually Good* without is continued Aid, *diſcourage you* from devoting your-lf to GOD, and engaging in a religious Life, conſi-ering *what abundant Reaſon* you have *to hope*, that *eſe gracious Influences* will be *communicated to you.* —— he *Light of Nature*, at the ſame Time that it teaches *e Need* we have *of Help from GOD* in a virtuous Courſe, ay lead us to conclude, that *ſo benevolent a Being*, who ſtows on the moſt unworthy and careleſs Part of Man-nd ſo many Bleſſings, *will take a peculiar Pleaſure* in *mmunicating* to ſuch as humbly aſk them, *thoſe gracious ſiſtances*, which may form their deathleſs Souls into his n Reſemblance, and fit them for that Happineſs to ich their Rational Nature is ſuited, and for which it s in its firſt Conſtitution intended. —— The *Word of OD* will much more abundantly *confirm ſuch an Hope.* u there hear *Divine Wiſdom crying*, even to thoſe who d long trifled with her Inſtructions, *Turn ye at my Re-of, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you* (p). You r the *Apoſtle* ſaying, *Let us come boldly to the Throne Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to in every Time of Need* (q). Yea, you there hear *our d himſelf*, arguing in this ſweet and convincing Man-; *If ye being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto Children, how much more ſhall your Heavenly Father e His Holy Spirit unto them that aſk Him* (r)? This t and Promiſe of *the Spirit* was *given unto Chriſt*, when aſcended up on high, *in Truſt* for all His true Diſciples. OD hath *ſhed it abroad abundantly upon us in Him* (s). d I may add, that *the very Deſire* you feel after *farther Communication of the Spirit*, is the Reſult of *Firſt-Fruits of it* already given: So that you may peculiar Propriety interpret it as *a ſpecial Call*, to *your Mouth wide, that he may fill it* (t). You *thirſt*,

) Prov. i. 23. (q) Heb. iv. 16. (r) Luke xi. 13.
Tit. iii. 6. (t) Pſal. lxxxi. 10.

and therefore you may chearfully plead, that *Jesus* hath *invited you to come unto Him and drink*; with a Promise not only that *you shall drink, if you come unto Him*, but alſo that *out of your Belly ſhall flow*, as it were, *Rivers of Living Water* for the Edification and Refreſhment of others (u).

§. 8. Go forth therefore, with humble Chearfulneſs to the Proſecution of *all the Duties* of the *Chriſtian Life*. Go, and proſper, *in the Strength of the Lord, making mention of His Righteouſneſs, and of His only* (x). And as a *Token of farther Communications*, may your Heart be *quickened* to the *moſt earneſt Deſires*, after *the Bleſſings* I have now been recommending to your Purſuit! May you be ſtirred up to *pour out your Soul before GOD*, in ſuch *holy Breathings* as theſe! and may they be *your daily Language* in His gracious Preſence!

An humble SUPPLICATION *for the Influences of Divine Grace, to form, and ſtrengthen Religion in the Soul.*

" BLESSED GOD! I ſincerely *acknowledge* " before Thee *mine own Weakneſs* and *Inſufficiency* " for any Thing that is *ſpiritually Good*. I have ex- " *perienced it* a Thouſand Times; and yet *my fond* " *Heart* would again *truſt itſelf* (y), and form Reſo- " tions *in its own Strength*. But let this be *the Fire* " *Fruits* of Thy *gracious Influence* upon it, to bring " to an humble *Diſtruſt of itſelf*, and to a *Repoſe* " *Thee!*

" Abundantly do I *rejoice*, Oh Lord, in the *kind A-* " *ſurances* which Thou giveſt me, of *Thy Readineſs* " beſtow *liberally* and *richly* ſo great a Benefit. I " therefore, according to Thy condeſcending Invi- " tion, *come with Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace, that* " *I may find Grace to help in every Time of Need* (z). " I mean not, Oh Lord GOD, to *turn Thy Grace* " *into Wantonneſs* or Perverſeneſs (a), or to make " *Weakneſs an Excuſe* for Negligence and Sloth.

" con-

(u) John vii. 37, 38. (x) Pſal. lxxi. 16. (y) Prov. xxviii. 26. (z) Heb. iv. 16. (a) Jude, *ver.* 4.

confeſs, Thou haſt already given me *more Strength than I have uſed*; and I charge it upon *myſelf*, and not on *Thee*, that I have not *long ſince received* ſtill *more abundant Supplies*. I deſire for the future to be *found diligent* in the *Uſe of all appointed Means*; in the *Neglect of which*, I well know, that *Petitions like theſe* would be *a profane Mockery*, and might much more probably *provoke Thee* to *take away what I have*, than *prevail upon Thee* to *impart more*. But firmly reſolving to *exert myſelf to the utmoſt*, I earneſtly intreat *the Communications of Thy Grace*, that I may be *enabled* to fulfil that Reſolution.

" *Be Surety*, Oh Lord, *unto thy Servant for Good* (b)! Be pleaſed to *ſhed abroad Thy Sanctifying Influences* on my Soul, to form me for *every Duty* Thou requireſt! *Implant*, I beſeech Thee, *every Grace* and *Virtue* deep in mine Heart; and *maintain the happy Temper*, in the Midſt of *thoſe Aſſaults*, *from within* and *from without*, to which I am *continually liable*, while I am *ſtill in this World*, and carry about with me *ſo many Infirmities!* Fill my Breaſt, I beſeech Thee, with *good Affections*, towards *Thee, my* GOD, and towards *my Fellow-Creatures!* Remind me always of *Thy Preſence*; and may I remember, that *every ſecret Sentiment* of my Soul *is open to Thee!* May I therefore guard againſt *the firſt Riſings of Sin*, and the *firſt Approaches to it!* And that *Satan* may not *find Room* for his *Evil Suggeſtions*, I earneſtly beg, *Thou*, Lord, *wouldſt fill my Heart* by *Thine Holy Spirit*, and take up *Thy Reſidence* there! *Dwell in me, and walk with me* (c); and let *my Body* be *the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt* (d)!

" May I be be ſo *joined to Chriſt Jeſus my Lord*, as to be *one Spirit with Him* (e), and feel *His invigorating Influences* continually bearing me on, ſuperior to *every Temptation*, and to *every Corruption!* That while *the Youths ſhall faint and be weary, and the young Men utterly fail*, I may ſo *wait upon the Lord*, as to *renew my Strength* (f); and may *go on from one*

(b) Pſal. cxix. 122. (c) 2 Cor. vi. 16. (d) 1 Cor vi. 19.
(e) 1 Cor. vi. 17. (f) Iſai. xl. 30, 31.

" *Degree* of Faith, and Love, and Zeal, and Holines
" *to another*, 'till I *appear* perfect *before Thee in* Zion (g)
" to drink in *immortal Vigour* and *Joy*, from *Thee*,
" *the everlasting Fountain* of both, *thro' Jesus* Chri
" my Lord, *in whom I have Righteousness* a
" *Strength* (h), and *to whom* I desire ever to *ascri*
" *the Praise* of all *mine Improvements in* both
" Amen."

(g) Psal. lxxxiv. 7. (h) Isai. xlv. 24.

CHA

CHAP. XVI.

The CHRISTIAN CONVERT warned of, and animated againſt, thoſe Diſcouragements which he muſt expect to meet with, when entering on a Religious Courſe.

Chriſt has inſtructed His Diſciples to expect Oppoſition and Difficulties in the Way to Heaven. §. 1. *Therefore,* [I.] *A more particular View of them is taken, as ariſing,* (1.) *From the Remainders of indwelling Sin.* §. 2. (2). *From the World, and eſpecially from former ſinful Companions.* §. 3. (3.) *From the Temptations and Suggeſtions of Satan.* §. 4. [II.] *The Chriſtian is animated and encouraged by various Conſiderations to oppoſe them; particularly, by —— the Preſence of* GOD, *——the Aids of Chriſt, ——the Example of others, who tho' feeble have conquered, —— and the Crown of Glory to be expected.* §. 5, 6. *Therefore, tho' Apoſtacy would be infinitely fatal, the Chriſtian may preſs on chearfully.* §. 7. *Accordingly the Soul, alarmed by theſe Views, is repreſented as committing itſelf to* GOD, *in the Prayer which concludes the Chapter.*

1. WITH the utmoſt Propriety has *our Divine Maſter* required us, to *ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate* (a); thereby (as it ſeems) intimating, not only that *the Paſſage is narrow*, but that it is *beſet with Enemies*; beſet on the Right Hand, and on the Left, *with Enemies* cunning and formidable. And be aſſured,

(a) Luke xiii. 24.

assured, Oh Reader, that whatever your Circumstances in Life are, *you must meet* and *encounter* them. It will therefore be *your Prudence*, to survey them attentively in your own Reflections, that you may see *what you are to expect*; and may consider *in what Armour* it is necessary *you should be clothed*, and *with what Weapons* you must be *furnished* to manage the Combat. You have often heard them *marshalled*, as it were, *under Three great Leaders, the Flesh, the World*, and *the Devil*; and according to this Distribution, I would call you to consider *the Forces of each*, as setting themselves in Array against you. Oh that you may be excited to *take yourself the whole Armour of* GOD (b) and to *acquit yourself like a Man* (c), and *a Christian!*

§. 2. LET your Conscience answer, Whether you do not carry about with you *a corrupt* and *a degenerate Nature?* You will, I doubt not, *feel its Effects*. You will *feel*, in the Language of the *Apostle*, (who speaks of it as the Case of *Christians* themselves,) *the Flesh lusting against the Spirit, so that you will not be able*, in all Instances, *to do the Things that you would* (d). You have so often *indulged your sinful Inclinations*, that you have greatly *increased their Strength*; and you will find *the Habits* you have contracted *cannot be broke* through without great Difficulty. You will, no doubt, often collect *the strong Figures*, in which the *Prophet* describes *a Case like yours*; and you will own, that it is justly *described* by that of *an Ethiopian changing his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots* (e). It is indeed possible, that at *first* you may find *such an Edge* and *Eagerness* upon your Spirits, as may lead you to imagine, that *all Opposition* will immediately *fall before you*. But alas, I fear, that in a little Time *these Enemies* which seemed to be *slain at your Feet*, will *revive*, and recover their Weapons, and *renew the Assault* in one Form or another. And perhaps *your most painful Combats* may be with *such* as you had thought *most easy to be conquished*, and *your greatest Danger* may arise from *some of those Enemies*, from whom you *apprehended the least* particular

(b) Eph. vi. 13. (c) 1 Cor. xvi. 13. (d) Gal. v.
(e) Jer. xiii. 23.

rticularly, from *Pride*, and from *Indolence of Spirit*; m a ſecret *Alienation of Heart from* GOD, and from *Indiſpoſition for converſing with Him*, thro' an *immo-rate Attachment* to *Things ſeen and Temporal*, tho' per-s they be not abſolutely and univerſally prohibited. a Thouſand of theſe Inſtances, you muſt learn to *deny rſelf*, or you *cannot be Chriſt's Diſciple* (f).

3. You muſt alſo lay your Account, to find *great ficulties* from *the World*; from *its Manners, Cuſtoms, Examples*. The *Things of the World* will hinder one Way; and the *Men of the World* another. haps you may meet with *much leſs Aſſiſtance in Reli-*, than you are now ready to expect, *from good Men*. e preſent Generation of them is generally *ſo cautious* void every Thing that looks like *Oſtentation*, and re ſeems ſomething ſo inſupportably dreadful in the rge of *Enthuſiaſm*, that you will find moſt of your riſtian *Brethren* ſtudying to *conceal* their *Virtue* and r *Piety*, much more than *others* ſtudy to *conceal* their s and their *Profaneneſs*. But while, unleſs your Si-ion be ſingularly happy, you meet with *very little* one Way, you will, no doubt, find *great Oppoſition* her. *The Enemies of Religion* will be *bold* and *active* heir Aſſaults, while many of *its Friends* ſeem *uncon-d*: And *One Sinner* will probably exert himſelf e to *corrupt you*, than *Ten Chriſtians* to *ſecure* and *you*. They who have once been *your Companions in*, will try a Thouſand artful Methods to *allure back again* to their forſaken Society: Some of them aps, with an Appearance of *tender Fondneſs*; and y more by the almoſt irreſiſtible Art of *Banter* and *cule*: That boaſted *Teſt of Right and Wrong*, as it been wantonly called, will be *tried upon you*, perhaps out any Regard to *Decency*, or even to *common Hu-ity*. You will be *derided* and *inſulted* by thoſe, e Eſteem and Affection you naturally deſire; and find *much more Propriety* than you imagine, in *that reſſion* of the Apoſtle, *The Trial of cruel Mockings* (g), h ſome *fear more* than either *Sword* or *Flames*. *Perſecution of the Tongue* you muſt expect to *go thro'*, perhaps may be *branded as a Lunatick*, for no other Cauſe,

(f) Mat. xvi. 24. (g) Heb. xi. 36.

Cause, than that you *now begin* to *exercise your Reso* *to Purpose*, and will not *join with those* that are destroy- ing their own Souls, *in their wild Career* of Folly a Madness.

§. 4. And it is not at all improbable, that in t mean Time *Satan* may be *doing his utmost* to *discou* and *distress you*. He will, no doubt, raise in your Im gination *the most tempting Idea* of the *Gratifications*, t *Indulgences*, and the *Companions*, you are obliged to *f sake*; and give you *the most discouraging* and *terrifyi View* of the *Difficulties*, *Severities*, and *Dangers*, which (as he will persuade you,) *inseparable from Religion*. H will not fail to *represent* GOD *Himself*, the Fountain Goodness and Happiness, as *an hard Master*, whom i impossible to please. He will perhaps *fill you* with *most distressful Fears*, and with cruel and insolent Mali *glory over you* as *his Slave*, when he knows you are *Lord's Freeman*. At one Time he will study by his v Suggestions to *interrupt you in your Duties*, as if th gave him an additional Power over you; at anoth Time he will endeavour to *weary you of your Devoti* by influencing you to *prolong it* to an *immoderate tedious Length*, lest his Power should be exerted up you when it ceases. In short, *this practised Decei* has *Artifices*, which it would require *whole Volume* display, with particular Cautions against each. And will *follow you* with malicious Arts and Pursuits t *very End of your Pilgrimage*; and will leave no *Meth unattempted*, which may be likely to *weaken your Hand* and to *sadden your Heart*; that if, thro' the gracious terposition of GOD, he *cannot prevent your final Ha piness*, he may at least *impair your Peace* and *your U fulness*, as you are *passing to it*.

§. 5. This is what *the People of* GOD *feel*, what *you will feel* in some Degree or other, if you ha *your Lot* and *your Portion among them*. But after all, *not discouraged*: Christ is *the Captain of your Sal tion* (h). It is *delightful* to consider Him under View. When we *take a Survey* of these *Hosts Enemies*, we may *lift up our Head* amidst them and say, *More, and greater, is He that is with us*,

(h) Heb. ii. 10.

l thoſe that are againſt us (i). *Truſt in the Lord*, and *u will be like Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, t abideth for ever* (k). When your *Enemies preſs upon you*, remember you are to *fight in the Preſence of* OD (l). Endeavour therefore to act *a gallant* and *reſolute Part*: Endeavour to *reſiſt them ſtedfaſt in the aith* (m). Remember, *He can give Power to the Faint, d increaſe Strength to them that have no Might* (n). *e hath done it* in Ten Thouſand Inſtances already; d he *will do it* in Ten Thouſand more. How many *riplings* have conquered their *gigantick Foes* in all their *ſt formidable Armour*, when they have *gone forth a-inſt them*, tho' but as it were *with a Staff and a ing, in the Name of the Lord* GOD *of Iſrael* (o)! ow many *Women* and *Children* have *trodden down* e Force of the Enemy, and *out of Weakneſs have been de ſtrong* (p)!

§. 6. AMIDST *all the Oppoſition* of *Earth* and *Hell*, ok *upward*, and look *forward*; and you will feel *your art animated* by the View. *Your General* is *near*: e is near *to aid you*: He is near *to reward you*. When u feel *the Temptation preſs the hardeſt*, think of *Him o endured even the Croſs itſelf* for your Reſcue. ew the *Fortitude* of your *Divine Leader*, and endea-ur to *march on in His Steps*. Hearken to *His Voice*, he proclaims it aloud, *Behold, I come quickly, and my ward is with me* (q): *Be thou faithful unto Death, d I will give thee a Crown of Life* (r). And Oh *w bright* will it *ſhine!* and *how long* will *its Luſtre !* It is *a Crown of Glory, which fadeth not ay* (s).

§. 7. IT is indeed true, that *ſuch as turn aſide to crooked ys*, will be *led forth with the Workers of Iniquity* (t) that *terrible Execution*, which the *Divine Juſtice* is *paring for them*; and that it would have been *better them, not to have known the Way of Righteouſneſs, n after having known it, to turn aſide from the ho-*

ly

) 2 Kings vi. 16. (k) Pſal. cxxv. 1. (l) Zech. x. 5.
1 Pet. v. 9. (n) Iſai. xl. 29. (o) 1 Sam. xvii. 40, 45.
Heb. xi. 34. (q) Rev. xxii. 12. (r) Rev. ii. 10.
1 Pet. v. 4. (t) Pſal. cxxv. 5.

ly Commandment (u). But I would, by Divine Grace, *better Things of you* (x). And I make it *my hearty Pr for you,* Oh Reader, that you may be *kept by the mig Power of GOD,* kept as in a Garrison, on all S fortified in the secureſt Manner, *thro' Faith unto S vation* (y).

The Soul alarmed by a Senſe of theſe Difficulties, t mitting itſelf to Divine Protection.

" BLESSED GOD, it is to *Thine Almig* " *Power* that I flee. Behold me ſurrounded w " *Difficulties* and *Dangers*, and ſtretch out *Thine O* " *potent Arm* to ſave me; *Oh Thou that ſaveſt by* " *Right Hand them that put their Truſt in Thee, fr* " *thoſe that riſe up againſt them* (z)! This Day do " ſolemnly put myſelf *under Thy Protection:* Exert " *Power* in my Favour, and permit me to " *the Shadow of Thy Wings my Refuge* (a)! Let " *Grace be ſufficient for me,* and *Thy Strength be* " *perfect in my Weakneſs* (b)! I dare not ſay, *I* " *never forſake Thee; I will never deny Thee* (c): " I hope, I can truly ſay, *O Lord, I would not do* " and that according to my preſent Apprehenſion " Purpoſe, *Death* would appear to me *much leſs ter* " *ble, than* in any wilful and deliberate Inſtance *to of* " *Thee.* Oh *root out thoſe Corruptions* from my He " which *in an Hour of* preſſing *Temptation* might inc " me to *view Things in a different Light,* and ſo mi " *betray me* into the Hand of the Enemy! *Strengt* " *my Faith,* Oh Lord, and *encourage my Hope!* Inſp " me with *an heroick Reſolution* in oppoſing ev " Thing that lies in my Way to Heaven; and let " *ſet my Face like a Flint* (d), againſt all the Aſſaults " Earth and Hell! *If Sinners entice me,* let me " *conſent* (e); if they *inſult me,* let me *not regard i* " if they *threaten me,* let me *not fear!* Rather may " *holy* and *ardent,* yet *prudent* and *well governed Z* " take Occaſion from that Malignity of Heart wh " th

(u) 2 Pet. ii. 21. (x) Heb. vi. 9. (y) 1 Pet. i.
(z) Pſal. xvii. 7. (a) Pſal. lvii. 1. (b) 2 Cor. xii.
(c) Mark xiv. 31. (d) Iſai. l. 7. (e) Prov. i. 10.

they discover, to *attempt their Conviction* and *Reformation!* At least, let me *never be ashamed* to *plead Thy Cause* against the most profane *Deriders of Religion!* *Make me to hear Joy and Gladness* in my own Soul; and I will endeavour to *teach Transgressors Thy Ways*, that *Sinners may be converted unto Thee* (f)! Yea, Lord, while *my Fears* continue, tho' I should *apprehend myself* condemned, *I am condemned so righteously* for my own Folly, that *I would be Thine Advocate*, tho' *against myself*.

"*Keep me*, Oh Lord, *now*, and *at all Times!* Never let me *think*, whatever *Age* or *Station* I attain, that *I am strong enough* to maintain the Combat *without Thee!* Nor let me *imagine myself*, even in this *Infancy of Religion* in my Soul, *so weak*, that *Thou canst not support me!* Wherever *Thou leadest me*, there let me *follow*; and whatever Station *Thou appointest*, there let me *labour*; there let me *maintain the Holy War* against *all the Enemies* of my Salvation, and rather *fall in it*, than basely *abandon it!*

"And Thou, *glorious Redeemer*, the *Captain of my Salvation*, the great *Author and Finisher of my Faith* (g), when I am in Danger of *denying Thee*, as *Peter* did, *look upon me* with that Mixture of *Majesty* and *Tenderness* (h), which may either *secure me from falling*, or may *speedily recover me* to *GOD* and *my Duty* again! And teach me to *take Occasion*, even from my Miscarriages, to *humble myself more deeply* for all that *has been amiss*, and to *redouble my future Diligence* and *Caution!* Amen.

(f) Psal. li. 8, 13. (g) Heb. xii. 2. (h) Luke xxii. 61.

CHAP. XVII.

The CHRISTIAN urged to, and assisted in, an express Act of SELF-DEDICATION to the Service of GOD.

The Advantages of such a Surrender are briefly suggested. §. 1. *Advices for the Manner of doing it; that it be deliberate, chearful, entire, and perpetual;* §. 3, 4. *and that it be expressed with some affecting Solemnity.* §. 5. *A written Instrument, to be signed and declared before GOD at some Season of extraordinary Devotion, proposed.* §. 6, 7. *A Specimen of such an Instrument concludes the Chapter, to be used with proper and requisite Alterations.*

§. 1. AS I would hope, that notwithstanding all *Views of Opposition* which do or may arise, yet in Consideration of those *noble Supports* and *Motives* which have been mentioned *in the Two preceding Chapters*, you are *heartily determined for the Service of GOD*, I would now *urge you* to make *a solemn* and *express Surrender of yourself* unto it. Do not only *form such a Purpose in your Heart*, but *expressly declare it* in the Divine Presence. Such *Solemnity in the Manner of doing it* is certainly *very reasonable* in the Nature of Things, and sure it is *highly expedient*, for *binding to the Lord* such a *treacherous Heart*, as we know our own to be. It will be *pleasant* to reflect upon it, as done at *such a Time*, with *such and such Circumstances of Place and Method*, which may serve to *strike the Memory* and *the Conscience*. The Sense of *the Vows of GOD* which *are upon you*, will *strengthen you* in an *Hour of Temptation*

the Recollection may alſo *encourage* your humble dneſs and Freedom *in applying to Him*, under the aracter and Relation of *your Covenant* GOD *and Fa-*, as future Exigencies may require.

2. Do it therefore, but *do it deliberately*. Conſi- *what it is*, that you are to do: And conſider, *how nable it is*, that it ſhould be done, and *done cordi-* and *chearfully*; *not by Conſtraint, but willingly* (a): in this Senſe, and in every other, GOD *loves a rful Giver* (b). Now ſurely there is nothing we ld do with *greater Chearfulneſs* or *more cordial ſent*, than making *ſuch a Surrender of ourſelves* to LORD; to the GOD, who *created us*, who *brought nto this* pleaſant and well furniſhed *World*, who *ſup- d us* in our *tender Infancy*, who *guarded us* in the ghtleſs Days of *Childhood* and *Youth*, who has *hi- to* continually *helped*, *ſuſtained*, and *preſerved us*. hing can be *more reaſonable*, than that we ſhould *ac- knowledge Him*, as *our rightful Owner*, and our *Sove- Ruler*; than that we ſhould *devote ourſelves to* , as *our moſt gracious Benefactor*, and *our ſupream ity*. Nothing can be *more apparently equitable*, than We, *the Product of His Power*, and *the Price of His Blood*, ſhould be *His*, and *His for ever*. If you he Matter in its juſt View, it will be *the Grief of your* , that you have ever *alienated yourſelf* from the Bleſ- GOD, and His Service: ſo far will you be from *ing to continue* in that *Eſtate of Alienation*, another , or another Day. You will *rejoice to bring back* Him *his revolted Creature*; and as you have in Times *yielded your Members as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſ- unto Sin*, you will delight to *yield yourſelves unto D, as alive from the Dead*, and to employ *your bers as Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs unto* GOD (c).

3. THE *Surrender* will alſo be as *entire*, as it is *ful* and *immediate*. *All you are*, and *all you have*, *all you can do*, your Time, your Poſſeſſions, your ence over others, will be *devoted to Him*, that for uture it may be employed *entirely for Him*, and *to Glory*. You will deſire to *keep back nothing from* ; but will ſeriouſly judge, that *you are then* in the

) 1 Pet. v. 2. (b) 2 Cor. ix. 7. (c) Rom. vi. 13.

trueſt and nobleſt Senſe *your own*, when you are *most* entirely *His*. You are alſo, on this great Occaſion, to *ſign all that you have* to the *Diſpoſal* of His wiſe gracious *Providence*; not only *owning His Power*, *conſenting to His undoubted Right*, to do what he pleaſ *with you*, and *all that He has given you*; and declar *a hearty Approbation* of all *that He has done*, and of *that He may farther do*.

§. 4. ONCE more, Let me remind you, that *this Surr der* muſt be *perpetual*. You muſt *give yourſelf up to* GO in ſuch a Manner, as *never more to pretend to be your o* For *the Rights of GOD* are, like His Nature, *Eternal Immutable*; and with Regard to His Rational Creat are *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever*.

§. 5. I WOULD farther adviſe and urge, that *this dication* may be made *with all poſſible Solemnity*. it *in expreſs Words*. And perhaps, it may be in m Caſes *moſt expedient*, as many *pious Divines* have reco mended, to do it *in Writing*. *Set your Hand and to it*, that *on ſuch a Day* of ſuch a Month and Year, *at ſuch a Place*, on full Conſideration and ſerious Re tion, you came to *this happy Reſolution*, that *whate others might do, you would ſerve the Lord* (d).

§. 6. SUCH an *Inſtrument*, you may, if you pl *draw up for yourſelf*; or if you rather chuſe to hav *drawn up to your Hand*, you may find *ſomething of Nature* below, in which you may eaſily *make ſuch A rations* as ſhall *ſuit your Circumſtances*, where there any Thing peculiar in them. But whatever you *weigh it well*, meditate attentively upon it, that y may *not be raſh with your Mouth, to utter any Thing fore GOD* (e). And when you determine to exe *this Inſtrument*, let the Tranſaction be attended w *ſome more than ordinary Religious Retirement*. Make if you conveniently can, *a Day of ſecret Faſting Prayer*: And when *your Heart is prepared* with a coming *Awe of the Divine Majeſty*, with an hum *Confidence in His Goodneſs*, and an earneſt *Deſire of Favour*, then *preſent yourſelf on your Knees* before GO and *read it over deliberately* and *ſolemnly*; and w you have *ſigned it, lay it by in ſome ſecure Place*, w

(d) Joſh. xxiv. 15. (e) Eccl. v. 2.

you may *review it* whenever you please; and make it your *Rule with yourself*, to *review it*, if possible, *at certain Seasons of the Year*, that you may *keep up the Remembrance* of it.

§. 7. At least *take this Course*, 'till you see *your Way clear* to *the Table of the Lord*, where you are to *renew the same Covenant*, and to *seal it*, with more affecting Solemnities. And GOD grant, that you may be *enabled to keep it*, and in the whole of your Conversation *to walk according to it!* May it be *an Anchor* to your Soul *in every Temptation*, and *a Cordial* to it *in every Affliction!* May the Recollection of it *embolden your Addresses to the Throne of Grace* now, and *give additional Strength to your departing Spirit*, in a Consciousness that it is *according to your Covenant GOD and Father*, and to *that precious Redeemer*, whose *Power* and *Faithfulness* will surely *keep what you commit to Him until that Day* (f)!

An Example of Self-Dedication, *or a Solemn Form of renewing our Covenant with GOD.*

ETERNAL and *unchangable* Jehovah! Thou great *Creator of Heaven and Earth*, and adorable *Lord of Angels and Men!* I, desire, *with the deepest Humiliation* and *Abasement of Soul*, to *fall down* at this Time *in Thine awful Presence*; and earnestly *pray*, that Thou wilt *penetrate my very Heart* with *a suitable Sense* of Thine *unutterable* and *inconceivable Glories!*

"*Trembling* may justly *take hold upon me* (g), when I *a sinful Worm* presume to *lift up my Head* to Thee, presume to *appear* in Thy Majestick Presence, on such an Occasion as this. *Who am I, Oh Lord GOD*, or *what is my House* (h)? what is *my Nature* or *Descent*, my *Character* and *Desert*, that I should *speak of this*, and desire that *I may be one Party* in a *Covenant*, where Thou, *the King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, art the other! I *blush*, and *am confounded*, even to mention it before Thee. But, Oh Lord, *great* as is *Thy Majesty*, so also is *Thy Mercy*. If Thou wilt *hold Converse* with any of *Thy Creatures*,

(f) 2 Tim. i. 12. (g) Job xxi. 6. (h) 2 Sam. vii. 18.

" Thy superlatively exalted Nature *must stoop*,
" stoop *infinitely low*. And I know, that *in and*
" *Jesus, the Son of Thy Love*, Thou condescended
" *visit sinful Mortals*, and to *allow their Approach*
" Thee, and *their Covenant Intercourse* with Th
" Nay, I know, that *the Scheme* and *Plan* is
" *own*, and that Thou hast *graciously sent* to *propo*
" to them; as *none untaught by Thee* would have
" *able to form it*, or *inclined to embrace it* even w
" actually proposed.

" To Thee therefore *do I now come*, invited by
" *Name*, and trusting in *the Righteousness* and *Gra*
" *Thy Son*: Laying myself at Thy Feet *with Sh*
" *and Confusion of Face*, and *smiting upon my Bre*
" say with the humble *Publican*, *GOD be mercif*
" *me a Sinner* (i)! I acknowledge, *Oh Lord*, th
" have been *a great Transgressor*. *My Sins have re*
" *ed unto Heaven* (k), and *mine Iniquities are lifte*
" *unto the Skies* (l). The *irregular Propensities* o
" corrupted and degenerate Nature *have*, in Ten Th
" sand aggravated Instances, *wrought to bring f*
" *Fruit unto Death* (m). And if Thou shouldst
" strict to *mark mine Offences*, I must be *silent* a
" *Load of Guilt*, and immediately *sink into Despa*
" But Thou hast graciously called me to *return*
" *Thee*, tho' I have been *a wandering Sheep*, *a pro*
" *Son*, *a back-sliding Child* (n). *Behold* therefore,
" Lord, *I come unto Thee*. I come, *convinced* not
" *of my Sin*, but *of my Folly*. I come, from my
" Heart *ashamed of myself*, and *with an Acknow*
" *ment* in the Sincerity and Humility of my
" that *I have played the Fool*, *and have erred e*
" *ingly* (o). I am *confounded myself* at the Remem
" of these Things: But be Thou *merciful to my*
" *righteousness*, *and do not remember against me my*
" *and my Transgressions* (p)! Permit me, Oh Lo
" *bring back* unto Thee *those Powers* and *Faculties*,
" I have ungratefully and sacrilegiously *alienated*

(i) Luke xviii. 13. (k) Rev. xviii. 5. (l) Jer.
(m) Rom. vii. 5. (n) Jer. iii. 22. (o) 1 Sam. xx
(p) Heb. viii. 12.

" *Thy Service*; and *receive*, I beſeech Thee, *Thy poor revolted Creature*, who is now *convinced of Thy Right to him*, and *deſires* nothing in the whole World ſo much as *to be Thine!*

" Bleſſed GOD, it is *with the utmoſt Solemnity* that I make *this Surrender of myſelf* unto Thee. *Hear, Oh Heavens, and give Ear, Oh Earth: I avouch the Lord this Day to be my* GOD (q); and I avouch and *declare myſelf* this Day *to be one of His Covenant Children and People.* Hear, Oh Thou *GOD of Heaven*, and record it in *the Book of Thy Remembrance* (r), that henceforth *I am Thine, entirely Thine.* I would not merely *conſecrate* unto Thee *ſome of my Powers*, or *ſome of my Poſſeſſions*; or give Thee *a certain Proportion of my Services*, or all I am capable of *for a limited Time*; but I would be *wholly Thine*, and *Thine for ever.* From *this Day*, do I *ſolemnly renounce* all the *former Lords* which *have had Dominion over me* (s), *every Sin* and *every Luſt*; and bid in Thy Name *an eternal Defiance*, to *the Powers of Hell*, which have moſt unjuſtly *uſurped the Empire* over my Soul, and to *all the Corruptions* which their fatal Temptations have introduced into it. *The whole Frame of my Nature*, all the Faculties of *my Mind*, and all the Members of *my Body*, would I *preſent before Thee* this Day, *as a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto* GOD, *which* I know to be *my moſt reaſonable Service* (t). To Thee *I conſecrate all my worldly Poſſeſſions: In Thy Service* I deſire to ſpend *all the Remainder of my Time upon Earth*, and beg Thou wouldſt *inſtruct* and *influence me*, ſo that, whether *my Abode here* be *longer* or *ſhorter*, *every Year* and *Month*, *every Day* and *Hour* may be *uſed in ſuch a Manner*, as ſhall moſt effectually *promote Thine Honour*, and *ſubſerve the Schemes* of Thy wiſe and gracious *Providence.* And I earneſtly *pray*, that whatever *Influence* Thou giveſt me *over others*, in any of the *ſuperior Relations of Life* in which I may ſtand, or in Conſequence of any *peculiar Regard* which may be paid

" to

(q) Deut. xxvi. 17. (r) Mal. iii. 16. (s) Iſai. xxvi. 13. Rom. xii. 1.

" to me, Thou wouldst give me *Strength* and *Courage*
" to *exert my self* to the utmost *for Thy Glory*: Resolv-
" ing, not only that *I will myself do it*, but that *all*
" *others*, so far as I can rationally and properly influ-
" ence them, *shall serve the Lord* (u). In this Course
" Oh Blessed GOD, would I *steadily persevere* to the
" very *End of my Life*; earnestly praying, that *every*
" *future Day* of it may *supply the Deficiencies*, and *cor-*
" *rect the Irregularities* of the *former*; and that I may
" by Divine Grace *be enabled*, not only to *hold on* in
" that happy Way, but daily to *grow more active* in
" it!

" Nor do I only *consecrate* all that I am, and have,
" *to Thy Service*; but I also *most humbly resign*, and sub-
" mit *to Thine holy and Sovereign Will*, myself, and all
" that I can call mine. *I leave*, Oh Lord, *to Thy Ma-*
" *nagement* and *Direction* all I possess, and all I wish;
" and set *every Enjoyment* and *every Interest* before
" Thee, to be *disposed of* as Thou pleasest. *Continue*, or
" *remove*, what thou hast given me; *bestow*, or *refuse*
" what I imagine I want, *as Thou*, Lord, *shalt see*
" *Good!* And tho' I dare not say, *I will never repine*,
" yet I hope, I may venture to say, that *I will labour*
" not only *to submit*, but *to acquiesce*; not only *to*
" *bear what thou doest* in Thy most afflictive Dispen-
" sations, but *to consent to it*, and *to praise Thee for it*,
" contentedly *resolving*, in all that Thou appointest for
" me, *my Will into Thine*, and looking on *myself* as *Noth-*
" *thing*, and on *Thee*, Oh GOD, as *the great Eternal*
" ALL, *whose Word* ought to *determine every Thing*,
" and *whose Government* ought to be *the Joy* of the
" whole *Rational Creation*.

" *Use me*, Oh Lord, I beseech Thee, *as the Instru-*
" *ment of Thy Glory*; and *honour me so far*, as either
" by doing or suffering what Thou shalt appoint, *to bring*
" *some Revenue* of *Praise to Thee*, and of *Benefit to the*
" *World* in which I dwell! And may it please Thee
" from this Day forward, to *number me among Thy peculi-*
" *ar People*, that I may *no more be a Stranger and Fo-*
" *reigner*, but *a Fellow Citizen with the Saints*, and
" *of the Houshold of GOD* (w)! *Receive*, Oh Heavenly

" Fa-

(u) Josh. xxiv. 15. (w) Eph. ii. 19.

" Father, *Thy returning Prodigal! Waſh me* in the *Blood of Thy dear Son; clothe me* with *His perfect Righteouſneſs*; and *ſanctify me throughout* by the Power of *Thy Spirit! Deſtroy*, I beſeech Thee, more and more *the Power of Sin* in mine Heart! *Transform me* more *into Thine own Image*, and faſhion me *to the Reſemblance of Jeſus*, whom henceforward I would acknowledge as *my Teacher* and *Sacrifice*, *my Interceſſor* and *my Lord!* Communicate to me, I beſeech Thee, *all needful Influences* of Thy *purifying*, Thy *chearing*, and Thy *comforting Spirit!* And *lift up* that *Light of Thy Countenance upon me*, which *will put* the ſublimeſt *Joy* and *Gladneſs into my Soul* (x)!

" Diſpoſe *my Affairs*, Oh GOD, in a Manner which may be moſt ſubſervient *to Thy Glory* and *my own* trueſt *Happineſs*; and when *I have done* and *borne Thy Will* upon Earth, *call me* from hence, *at what Time*, and *in what Manner* Thou pleaſeſt: Only grant, that *in my dying Moments*, and in the near Proſpects of Eternity, *I may remember* theſe *my Engagements to Thee*, and may employ my lateſt Breath in Thy Service! And *do Thou*, Lord, when thou ſeeſt the Agonies of diſſolving Nature upon me, *remember this Covenant* too, even *tho' I ſhould* then *be incapable* of recollecting it! *Look down*, Oh my Heavenly Father, *with a pitying Eye* upon Thy *languiſhing*, Thy *dying Child*; place *Thine Everlaſting Arms underneath me* for my Support; put *Strength* and *Confidence* into *my departing Spirit*; and *receive it to the Embraces* of Thine Everlaſting Love! *Welcome it* to the Abodes of *them that ſleep in Jeſus* (y), to wait with them *that glorious Day*, when *the laſt of Thy Promiſes* to Thy Covenant People ſhall be *fulfilled* in their triumphant *Reſurrection*, and that *abundant Entrance*, which ſhall be *adminiſtred to them* into that *Everlaſting Kingdom* (z), of which Thou haſt aſſured them *by Thy Covenant*, and *in the Hope* of which I now *lay hold on it*, deſiring *to live* and *to die*, as *with mine Hand on that Hope!*

" And when *I am* thus *numbered among the Dead*, and all the Intereſts of Mortality are over with me

" for

(x) Pſal. iv. 6, 7. (y) 1 Theſſ. iv. 14. (z) 2 Pet. i. 11

" for ever, if *this solemn Memorial* should chance to *fa*
" *into the Hands* of any *surviving Friends*, may it
" the Means of *making serious Impressions* on their Mi
" May they *read it*, not only as *my Language*, but
" *their own*; and learn *to fear the Lord my GOD*, a
" with me *to put their Trust under the Shadow*
" *His Wings* for Time and for Eternity! And may th
" also learn *to adore* with me *that Grace*, which *incli*
" *our Hearts* to *enter into the Covenant*, and condescen
" to *admit us into it* when so inclined; *ascribing* wi
" me, and with all the Nations of the Redeemed,
" *the Father, the Son*, and *the Holy Ghost*, that *Glo*
" *Honour*, and *Praise*, which is so justly *due to each D*
" *vine Person* for the Part He bears in this illustrio
" Work! *Amen!*"

CHA

CHAP. XVIII.

f entering into Church-Communion by an Attendance upon the LORD'S-SUPPER.

e Reader, being already ſuppoſed to have entered into Covenant with GOD, §. 1. *is urged publickly to ſeal that Engagement at the Table of the Lord:* §. 2. (1.) *From a View of the Ends for which that Ordinance was inſtituted,* §. 3. *whence its Uſefulneſs is ſtrongly inferred.* §. 4. *And,* (2.) *From the Authority of Chriſt's Appointment, which is ſolemnly preſſed on the Conſcience.* §. 5. *Objections from Apprehenſions of Unfitneſs,* §. 6. *Weakneſs of Grace, &c. briefly anſwered.* §. 7. *At leaſt, ſerious Thoughtfulneſs on this Subject is abſolutely inſiſted upon.* §. 8. *The Chapter is cloſed with a Prayer for one, who deſires to attend, but finds himſelf preſſed with remaining Doubts.*

1. I HOPE, *this Chapter* will find you by a moſt expreſs Conſent become *one of* GOD's *Covenant ple,* ſolemnly and cordially devoted to his Service: d it is *my hearty Prayer,* that *the Covenant* you have *de on Earth* may be *ratified in Heaven.* But for r farther Inſtruction and Edification give me Leave to ind you, that *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* hath appointed *culiar Manner* of expreſſing our Regard to Him, of ſolemnly *renewing our Covenant with Him*; ch, tho' it does not forbid *any other proper Way* of g it, muſt by no Means be *ſet aſide,* or *neglected,* ny Methods which may appear to us ever ſo prudent expedient.

2. OUR Lord has wiſely ordained, that *the Advan- of Society* ſhould be *brought into Religion*; and as by

by his Command *profeſſing Chriſtians* aſſemble toge
for *other Acts of publick Worſhip*, ſo he has been ple
to inſtitute *a ſocial Ordinance*, in which *a whole A*
bly of them *is to come to His Table*, and there to
the ſame Bread, and *drink the ſame Cup*. And
they are to do, *as a Token* of their affectionate *Re*
brance of his dying Love, of the ſolemn *Surrender*
themſelves to GOD, and of their ſincere *Love to*
another and to all their *Fellow-Chriſtians*.

§. 3. THAT theſe are indeed *the great Ends* of
Lord's-Supper, I ſhall not now ſtay to argue at l
You need only *read* what the Apoſtle *Paul* has wri
in *the Tenth* and *Eleventh Chapters* of his *Firſt Ep*
to the Corinthians, to convince you fully of this.
there expreſsly tells us, that *our Lord* commanded
Bread to be eaten, and *the Wine to be drank, in Re*
brance of Him (a), or as a Commemoration or Mem
of him; ſo that *as often as* we attend this Inſtitu
we ſhew forth our Lord's Death, which we are to
even until he come (b). And it is particularly aſſer
that *the Cup is the New Teſtament in his Blood* (c);
is, it is *a Seal of that Covenant* which was *ratifi*
his Blood. Now it is evident, that in Conſequence
this, we are to approach it *with a View to that Co*
nant, deſiring *its Bleſſings*, and reſolving by Di
Grace to comply with *its Demands*. On the wh
therefore, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, we have *Communion*
the Body, and the Blood of Chriſt (d), and *partak*
his Table and *of his Cup*, we *converſe with Chriſt*,
join ourſelves to Him as his People; as *the Heathen*
their idolatrous Rites, had Communion with *their*
ties, and joined themſelves to them; and *the Jews*,
eating their Sacrifices, converſed with JEHOVAH,
joined themſelves to him. He farther reminds th
that *tho' many*, they were *one Bread and one Body*, b
all Partakers of that one Bread (e), and being *all*
to drink into one Spirit (f); that is, meeting tog
as if they were but *one Family*, and joining *in the*
memoration of that *one Blood* which was their com
Ranſom, and of *the Lord Jeſus* their common H

(a) 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. (b) *Ver.* 26. (c) *Ver.* 25.
(d) 1 Cor. x, 16. (e) 1 Cor, x, 17. (f) 1 Cor, xii. 13.

r it is evident, *all these Reasonings* are *equally ap-*
able to Christians in succeeding Ages. Permit me
fore, *by the Authority of our Divine Master*, to
upon you the Observation of *this Precept*.

. 4. AND let me also urge it, from the *apparent*
dency which it has *to promote your truest Advantage*.
are *setting out in the Christian Life*; and I have
inded you at large, of *the Opposition* you must ex-
to meet with in it. It is *the Love of Christ* which
animate you to break thro' all. What then can be
desirable, than to bear about with you *a lively*
of it? and what can awaken that Sense more, than
Contemplation of his Death as there represented?
can behold *the Bread broken*, and *the Wine poured*
and not reflect, how *the Body* of the Blessed *Jesus*
even *torn in Pieces* by his Sufferings, and *his sacred*
poured forth like Water on the Ground? Who
think of the *Heart-rending Agonies of the Son of*
D, as *the Price of our Redemption and Salvation*,
not feel his Soul *melted with Tenderness*, and *in-*
d with grateful Affection? What an *exalted View*
it give us *of the Blessings of the Gospel-Covenant*,
we consider it as *established in the Blood of* GOD'S
begotten Son? And when we *make our Approach* to
D as our *Heavenly Father*, and *give up ourselves*
Service in this solemn Manner, what *an awful*
dency has it *to fix the Conviction*, that *we are not our*
, being *bought with* such *a Price* (g)? What a Ten-
has it, *to guard us against every Temptation* to
Sins which we have so solemnly renounced, and *to*
our Fidelity to Him to whom we have *bound our*
as with an Oath? Well may *our Hearts* be *knit*
ther in mutual *Love* (h), when we consider ourselves
in Christ (i): *His Blood* becomes *the Cement* of the
ty, joins us in Spirit, not only *to each other*, but *to*
at in every Place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ
ord, both theirs and ours (k): And we *anticipate*,
eaſing Hope, *that Blessed Day*, when *the Assembly*
be *compleat*, and we shall all *be for ever with the*
(l). Well may *these Views* engage us to *deny our-*

Q *selves*,

1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. (h) Col. ii. 2. (i) Gal. iii. 28.
Cor. i. 2. (l) 1 Thess. iv. 17.

ſelves, and to *take up our Croſs to follow our crucif* *Maſter* (m): Well may they engage us to *do our utm* by Prayer and all other ſuitable Endeavours, *to ſerve* *Followers* and *his Friends*; to ſerve thoſe, whom hath *purchaſed with his Blood*, and who are to be *Aſſociates*, and *ours*, in the Glories of an happy I mortality.

§. 5. IT is alſo the expreſs *Inſtitution* and Comm of our Bleſſed *Redeemer*, that *the Members of ſuch S* *eties* ſhould be tenderly *ſolicitous* for the *ſpiritual W* *fare of each other*; and that, on the whole, *his Churc* may be kept *pure* and *holy*: That they ſhould *withdr* *themſelves from every Brother that walketh diſorderly* (that they ſhould *mark ſuch as cauſe Offences* or Scand amongſt them, *contrary to the Doctrine which they h* *learned, and avoid them* (o); that *if any obey not* *Word of Chriſt by his Apoſtles*, they ſhould *have no* *lowſhip* or Communion *with ſuch, that they may be* *ſhamed* (p); that they ſhould *not eat with ſuch*, as *notoriouſly irregular* in their Behaviour, but on the c trary ſhould *put away from among themſelves ſuch wic* *Perſons* (q). It is evident therefore, that *the Inſtitu* of *ſuch Societies* is greatly for the *Honour of Chriſtian* and for the *Advantage of its particular Profeſſors*. A conſequently, every Conſideration of *Obedience* to *common Lord*, and of *prudent Regard* to our *own Be* and that of *our Brethren*, will require, that thoſe *love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in Sincerity*, ſhould *enter* *to them*, and *aſſemble among them* in theſe their moſt lemn and peculiar *Acts of Communion at his Table*.

§. 6. I INTREAT you therefore, and, if I may pre to ſay it, *in his Name* and *by his Authority I charg* on your Conſcience, that *this Precept* of our dying L *go not* as it were *for nothing* with you; but that, if indeed *love him*, you *keep this* as well as *the reſt* o Commandments. I know, you may be ready to *Objections*. I have elſewhere debated many of *the* *of them* at large, and I hope, not without ſome Effect.* The *great Queſtion* is that, which relat

(m) Mat. xvi. 24. (n) 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. (o) Rom. xv
(p) 2 Theſſ. iii. 14. (q) 1 Cor. v. 11, 13.

* See the *Fourth* of my *Sermons to Young Perſons*.

being prepared for a worthy Attendance: And in conjunction with what has been said before, I think *that* may be brought to *a very short Issue.* Have you, so far as you know your own Heart, *been sincere* in that deliberate *Surrender of yourself to* GOD *thro' Christ,* which I recommended in the *former Chapter?* If *you have,* (whether it were *with* or *without* the *particular* Form or Manner of doing it *there recommended,*) you have certainly *taken hold of the Covenant,* and therefore *have a Right to the Seal of it:* And there is not, and cannot be, *any other View of the Ordinance,*—in which you can have *any farther Objection* to it. If you desire to *remember Christ's Death,* if you desire to *renew the Dedication of yourself to* GOD *thro' Him,* if you would *join yourselves among his People,* if you would *love them and do them Good* according to your Ability, and, on the whole, *would not allow yourself* in the Practice of *any known Sin,* or in the Omission of *one known Duty,* I will venture confidently to say, not only that *you may be welcome to the Ordinance,* but that *it was instituted for such as you.*

7. As for *other Objections,* a few Words may suffice by way of Reply. *The Weakness of the Religious Principle* in your Soul, if it be *really implanted* there, is so far from being *an Argument against* your seeking such a Method to strengthen it, that it rather *strongly inforces* the *Necessity* of doing it.——*The Neglect of this Solemnity by so many* that call themselves *Christians,* should rather *engage you* so much the more *to distinguish your Zeal for an Institution,* in this Respect so much slighted and injured.—— And as for *the Fears of aggravated Guilt* in Case of *Apostacy,* do not indulge them. This may, by the Divine Blessing, be *an effectual Remedy against the Evil you fear;* and it is certain, that *after* all *you* must already *have known* and *felt,* before you could be brought into your present Situation, (on the Supposition I have now been making,) there can be *no Room* to think of *a Retreat; no Room,* even for *the* well-*founded Hope* of being *less miserable* than the Generality of those that have perished. Your Scheme therefore must be, to make *your Salvation as sure,* and to make it *as glorious* as possible: And I know not *any*

Appointment of our Blessed *Redeemer*, which may ha
a more comfortable Aspect upon that blessed End, th
this which I am now recommending to you.

§. 8. ONE Thing I would at least *insist upon*, and
see not with what Face it can be denied. I mean, th
you should *take this Matter into a serious Consideratio*
That you should diligently enquire, *whether you ha*
Reason in your Conscience *to believe*, it is *the Will*
GOD you should *now approach to the Ordinance*,
not: And that you should *continue your Reflections*, yo
Enquiries, and your *Prayers*, till you find *farther E*
couragement to come, if that Encouragement be hithe
wanting. For of this be assured, that *a State* in wh
you are on the whole *unfit to approach this Ordinance*,
a State in which you are *destitute* of the necessary *Pr*
rations for *Death* and *Heaven*; in which therefore,
you would not allow yourselves to *slumber on the B*
of Destruction, you *ought not to rest* so much as one
gle Day.

A PRAYER *for one, who earnestly desires to approa*
the Table of the Lord, *yet has some remaining D*
concerning his Right to that solemn Ordinance.

" BLESSED LORD, I adore Thy wise and
" cious *Appointments*, for the Edification of
" *Church* in Holiness and in Love. I thank Thee,
" Thou hast *commanded Thy Servants*, to *form them*
" *into Societies*; and I adore my gracious *Saviour*,
" hath *instituted*, as with His dying Breath, *th*
" *Solemnity of His Supper*, to be thro' all Ages *a*
" *morial of His dying Love*, and *a Bond of that U*
" which it is His Sovereign Pleasure that His P
" should preserve. I hope, *Thou*, Lord, *art W*
" to the *Sincerity*, with which I desire to *give my*
" to Thee; and that I may *call Thee to record* o
" Soul, that *if I now hesitate* about *this parti*
" *Manner* of doing it, *it is not* because I would
" myself to *break any of Thy Commands*, or to
" *any of Thy Favours*. I trust, Thou knowe
" *my present Delay arises* only from *an Uncert*
" *to my own Duty*, and *a Fear of profaning Holy*

by an *unworthy Approach* to them. Yet surely, Oh Lord, if Thou hast given me *a Reverence for Thy Command, a Desire of Communion with Thee*, and *a Willingness to devote myself wholly to Thy Service*, I may regard it *as a Token for Good*, that Thou art *disposed to receive me*, and that I am not *wholly unqualified for an Ordinance*, which I *so highly honour*, and *so earnestly desire*. I therefore make it *mine humble Request* unto Thee, Oh Lord, *this Day*, that Thou wouldst graciously be pleased to *instruct me in my Duty*, and to *teach me what Thou wouldst have me to do! Examine me, Oh Lord, and prove me; try my Reins and my Heart* (r)! Is there *any secret Sin*, to the Love and Practice of which I would indulge? Is there *any of thy Precepts*, in the habitual Breach of which I would allow myself? I trust, I can *appeal to Thee* as a Witness, that *there is not*. Let me not then *wrong mine own Soul* by a causeless and sinful *Absence from Thy sacred Table!* But grant, *Oh Lord*, I beseech Thee, that *Thy Word, Thy Providence*, and *Thy Spirit* may so concur, as to *make my Way plain* before me (s)! Scatter *my remaining Doubts*, if Thou seest they have no just Foundation! Fill me with *a more assured Faith*, with *a more ardent Love*; and *plead Thine own Cause* with my Heart in such a Manner, as that I may not be able any longer to *delay that Approach*, which if I am *Thy Servant indeed* is equally *my Duty* and *my Privilege!* In the mean Time, grant, that it may never be *long out of my Thoughts*: But that I may *give all Diligence*, if there be any remaining Occasion of *Doubt*, to *remove it*, by a more affectionate Concern to *avoid* whatever is *displeasing to the Eyes of Thine Holiness*, and to *practise* the full Extent of *my Duty!* May the Views of *Christ crucified* be so *familiar* to my Mind, and may a Sense of *His dying Love* so powerfully *constrain my Soul*, that my own *growing Experience* may put it out of all Question, that I am *one of those* for whom *Christ* intended *this Feast of Love!*

And even *now*, as *joined to Thy Churches* in *Spirit* and in *Love*, tho' not in *so express* and *intimate a*

(r) Psal. xxvi. 2. (s) Prov. xv. 19.

" *Bound* as I could wish, would I heartily *pray*, that
" *Blessing* may be *on all Thy People*: That Thou would
" *feed Thine Heritage, and lift them up for ever*(
" May *every Christian Society* flourish in *Knowledge*,
" *Holiness*, and in *Love!* May all *Thy Priests* be cl
" *with Salvation*, that by their Means *Thy chosen P*
" *ple* may be made *joyful* (u)! And may there be
" *glorious Accession to Thy Churches* every where, *of th*
" who may *fly* to them *as a Cloud, and as Doves*
" *their Windows* (w)! May *Thy Table*, Oh Lord,
" *furnished with Guests* (x); and may all that *love*
" *Salvation, say, Let the Lord be magnified*, who h
" *Pleasure in the Prosperity of His Servants* (y)! An
" earnestly *pray*, that all who profess to *have receiv*
" *Christ Jesus the Lord*, may be duly careful to w
" *in Him* (z); and that we may *all be preparing for*
" *general Assembly of the First-born*, and may *join*
" that *nobler* and *more immediate Worship*, where
" *these Types* and *Shadows* shall be *laid aside*; wh
" even *these Memorials* shall be *no longer necessary*,
" *a living present Redeemer* shall be *the everlasting*
" of those, who have *here delighted*, in his Absence,
" *commemorate His Death!*" Amen.

(t) Psal. xxviii. 9. (u) Psal. cxxxii. 16. (w) Isa. lx.
(x) Mat. xxii. 10. (y) Psal. xxxv. 27. (z) Col. ii. 6.

N. B. I purposed to have added something here, concern
regular Approach to the Lord's Table, a proper *Attendance upon it*,
suitable *Reflections after it*: But I find this Work swell under
Hand, beyond what I at first expected; and therefore, as the
tieles have been handled by so many *valuable Writers*, I shall
fer to them, and particularly, to *Dr. Earle's Sacramental Exercise*,
Mr. Grove's Devotional Exercises relating to the Lord's Supper:
which I think remarkably excellent in their Kind, and which
be had at very easy Rates. I am not without some Thoughts
publishing a small Volume of *Sacramental Meditations on select Te*
Scripture, if God spare me to finish my *Exposition on the New Te*
ment, and some *other Pieces* which I have now in Hand,

CHA

CHAP. XIX.

Some more particular Directions for maintaining continual Communion with GOD, or being in his Fear all the Day long.

A Letter to a pious Friend on this Subject introduced here. §. 1. *A General Plan of Directions.* §. 2. [I.] *For the Beginning of the Day:* §. 3. (1.) *Lifting up the Heart to GOD at our first Awakening:* §. 4. (2.) *Setting ourselves to the secret Devotions of the Morning; with Respect to which particular Advices are given.* §. 5,—10. [II.] *For the Progress of the Day:* §. 11. *Directions are given concerning,* (1.) *Seriousness in Devotion.* §. 12. (2.) *Diligence in Business.* §. 13. (3.) *Prudence in Recreations.* §. 14. (4.) *Observation of Providences.* §. 15. (5.) *Watchfulness against Temptations.* §. 16. (6.) *Dependance on Divine Influences.* §. 17. (7.) *Government of the Thoughts when in Solitude.* §. 18. (8.) *Management of Discourse in Company.* §. 19. [III.] *For the Conclusion of the Day:* §. 20. (1.) *With the Secret Devotions of the Evening.* §. 21. *Directions for Self-Examination at large.* §. 22, 23. (2.) *Lying down with a proper Temper.* §. 24. *Conclusion of the Letter,* §. 25. *and of the Chapter:* §. 26. *With a Serious View of Death, proper to be taken at the Close of the Day.*

§. 1. I WOULD hope, that upon serious Consideration, Self-Examination, and Prayer, *the Reader* may by this Time be *come to a Resolution* to *attend the Table of the Lord,* and to *seal his Vows* there. I will now suppose *that solemn Transaction* to be *over,* or some other

other deliberate Act to have paſſed, by which he has *given himſelf up* to the Service of GOD; and that *his Concern now* is to enquire, how he may *act* according to *the Vows of GOD which are upon him*. Now for his farther Aſſiſtance here, beſides *the general View* I have already given *of the Chriſtian Temper* and *Character*, I will propoſe ſome *more particular Directions*, relating to maintaining *that devout, ſpiritual*, and *heavenly Character*, which may, in the Language of *Scripture*, be called *a daily walking with GOD*, or *being in his Fear all the Day long* (a). And I know not how I can expreſs *the Idea* and *Plan*, which I have formed *of this*, in a more clear and diſtinct Manner, than I did in *a Letter*, which I wrote *many Years ago* *, to a *young Perſon* of eminent Piety, with whom I had then an intimate Friendſhip; and who, to the great Grief of all that knew him, died a few Months after he received it. Yet I hope he lived long enough to *reduce the Directions into Practice*, which I wiſh and pray that *every Reader may do*, ſo far as they may properly ſuit his Circumſtances in Life, conſidering it as if addreſſed to himſelf.

My Dear Friend,

Since you deſire my Thoughts *in writing*, and at *large*, on the Subject of our late Converſation, viz. "By what *particular Methods* in our daily Conduct, "*Life of Devotion* and *Uſefulneſs* may be moſt happily "*maintained*, and *ſecured?*" I ſet myſelf with Chearfulneſs, to *recollect* and *digeſt the Hints* which I then gave you; hoping, it may be of *ſome Service to you* in your moſt important Intereſts; and may alſo *fix on my own Mind* a deeper Senſe of my Obligations, to govern my own Life by *the Rules* I offer to others. I eſteem *Attempts of this Kind* among the pleaſanteſt Fruits, and the ſureſt Cements of *Friendſhip*; and as I hope our will *laſt for ever*, I am perſuaded *a mutual Care* to cheriſh *Sentiments of this Kind* will add everlaſting Endearments to it.

§. 2. THE *Directions* you will expect from me on this Occaſion, naturally divide themſelves into *Three Heads*

(a) Prov. xxiii. 17. * *N. B.* It was in the Year 1727.

Heads. How we are to *regard* GOD, —— in the *Beginning*, —— the *Progreſs*, —— and the *Cloſe* of *the Day*.

I will open my Heart freely to you with Regard to *each*, and leave you to judge, how far *theſe Hints* may ſuit your Circumſtances; aiming at leaſt to keep between *the Extreams*, of a ſuperſtitious *Strictneſs in Trifles*, and of an indolent *Remiſſneſs*, which, if admitted in *little Things*, may draw after it *criminal Neglects*, and at length *yet more criminal Indulgences*.

§. 3. [I.] In the *Beginning of the Day*: It ſhould certainly be our Care, —— to *lift up our Hearts to* GOD, as ſoon as we *wake*, and while we are *riſing*; ——and then, to *ſet ourſelves* ſeriouſly and immediately *to the ſecret Devotions of the Morning*.

§. 4. For the *firſt* of theſe, it ſeems *exceeding natural*. There are ſo many Things that may ſuggeſt a great Variety of pious *Reflections* and *Ejaculations*, which are *ſo obvious*, that one would think *a ſerious Mind* could *hardly miſs* them. The Eaſe and Chearfulneſs of our Mind at our firſt Awakening; the Refreſhment we find from Sleep; the Security we have enjoyed in that defenceleſs State; the Proviſion of warm and decent Apparel; the chearful Light of the returning Sun; or even (what it is not unfit to mention to *you*,) the Contrivances of Art, taught and furniſhed by the great Author of all our Conveniencies, to ſupply us with many uſeful Hours of Life in the Abſence of the Sun; the Hope of returning to the dear Society of our Friends; the Proſpect of ſpending another Day, in the Service of God, and the Improvement of our own Minds; and above all, the lively Hope of a joyful Reſurrection, to an eternal Day of Happineſs and Glory: Any of *theſe Particulars*, and many more which I do not mention, may furniſh us with *Matter of pleaſing Reflection* and *chearful Praiſe*, while we are *riſing*. And for our farther Aſſiſtance, when we are alone at this Time, it may not be improper to *ſpeak* ſometimes *to ourſelves*, and ſometimes *to our Heavenly Father*, in the natural Expreſſions of *Joy* and *Thankfulneſs*. Permit me, *Sir*, to add, that if we find our Hearts in *ſuch a Frame* at our *firſt Awakening*, even *that* is *juſt Matter of Praiſe*, and the rather, as perhaps it is *an Anſwer to the Prayer* with which we lay down.

§. 5. For

§. 5. For the Exercise of *secret Devotion in a Mor-ing*, which I hope will generally be *our first Work*, cannot prescribe an exact Method to another. You mu my dear Friend, *consult your own Taste* in some Measur The *constituent Parts* of *the Service* are in the gener *plain*. Were I to propose *a particular Model* for thos who have *Half* or *Three Quarters of an Hour* at Com mand, which with prudent Conduct I suppose most m have, it should be *this*.

§. To begin *the stated Devotions of the Day* wi a solemn *Act of Praise*, offered to God *on our Kne* and generally *with a low*, yet *distinct Voice*; acknow ledging *the Mercies*, we had been reflecting on while ri ing; never forgetting to mention *Christ*, as the gre Foundation of all our Enjoyments and our Hopes, or return Thanks for the Influences of *the Blessed Spiri* which have led our Hearts to God, or are then engag ing us to seek him. *This*, as well as *other Offices Devotion* afterwards mentioned, must be done *attentive* and *sincerely*; for *not to offer our Praises heartily*, is the Sight of God *not to praise him at all*. This Addr of Praise may properly be concluded with *an express R newal of our Covenant with GOD*, declaring our co tinued repeated *Resolution* of being devoted to Him, a particularly of living to his Glory the ensuing Day.

§. 7. It may be proper, after this, to *take a Pro pect of the Day before us*, so far as we can probably for see, in the general, *where* and *how it may be spent*; a seriously to reflect, "How shall I employ myself f "God this Day? What Business is to be done, and "what Order? What Opportunities may I expect "either of doing, or of receiving Good? What Tem "tations am I like to be assaulted with, in any Plac "Company, or Circumstance, which may probably o "cur? In what Instances have I lately failed? A "how shall I be safest now?"

§. 8. After this Review, it will be proper to *of up a short Prayer*; begging, that God would *quick us* to each of these *foreseen Duties*; that he would *fo tify us* against each of these *apprehended Dangers*; t he would *grant us Success* in such or such a *Bus* undertaken for his Glory; and also, that he w

p us to discover and improve *unforeseen Opportunities*, resist *unexpected Temptations*, and to bear patiently, d religiously, *any Afflictions* which may surprize us in e Day on which we are entering.

§. 9. I WOULD advise you after this, to *read some rtion of Scripture*; not a great deal, nor the whole ble in its Course; but *some select Lessons* out of its ost useful Parts, perhaps *Ten* or *Twelve Verses*; not ubling yourself much about the *exact Connection*, or er *critical Niceties*, which may occur, (tho' at other nes I would recommend them to your Enquiry, as have Ability and Opportunity;) but considering m merely *in a devotional* and *a practical View*. Here e *such Instructions* as readily present themselves to r Thoughts, repeat them over to your own Conscie, and charge your Heart religiously to observe them d act upon them, under a Sense of the *Divine Autho*which attends them. And if you *pray over* the Subce of *this Scripture*, with your *Bible* open before , it may *impress your Memory* and *your Heart* yet re deeply, and may form you to *a Copiousness* and *iety* both of *Thought* and *Expression* in Prayer.

§. 10. IT might be proper to close these Devotions h *a Psalm* or *Hymn*: And I rejoice with you, that o' the pious Care of *Dr. Watts*, and some other *Sad Poets*, we are provided with so rich a Variety *for Assistance of the Closet* and *Family* on these Occasions, ell as *for the Service of the Sanctuary*.

§. 11. [II.] THE most material *Directions* which e occurred to me, relating to *the Progress of the Day*, these: —— That we be *serious* in the *Devotions* of Day; —— that we be *diligent* in the *Business* of that is, in the Prosecution of our *worldly Callings*; that we be *temperate* and *prudent* in the *Recreations* t; —— that we carefully *remark* the *Providences* of Day; —— that we cautiously *guard against* the *Temps* of it; —— that we *keep up* a lively and humble *ndance* upon the *Divine Influence*, suitable to every rgency of it; —— that we *govern our Thoughts well* e *Solitude* of the Day, —— and *our Discourses well* e *Conversations* of it. These, *Sir*, were *the Heads* Sermon, which you lately heard me preach on this Occa-

Occasion, and to which I know you referred in that
quest which I am now endeavouring to answer. I
therefore touch upon *the most material Hints*, which
under each of these Particulars.

§. 12. (1.) For *Seriousness in Devotion*, whe
Publick or *Domestick*: Let us take a few Moments,
fore we enter upon such Solemnities, to pause, and ref
on the Perfections of the God we are addressing to,
the Importance of the Business we are coming about,
the Pleasure and Advantage of a regular and devout
tendance, and on the Guilt and Folly of an Hypocr
cal Formality. *When engaged*, let us maintain a
Watchfulness over our own Spirits, and check the
Wanderings of Thought. And *when the Duty is o*
let us immediately reflect on the Manner in which it
been performed, and ask our own Consciences, whe
we have Reason to conclude, that we are *accepted of* G
in it? For there is *a certain Manner* of going thro' t
Offices, which our own Hearts will immediately tell
it is impossible for GOD to approve: and if we have
advertently fallen into it, we ought to be *deeply hum*
before God for it, lest *our very Prayer become Sin* (b).

§. 13. (2.) As for the Hours of *worldly Busin*
whether it be, as with you, *that of the Hands*;
whether it be *the Labour of a learned Life*, not immedia
relating to Religious Matters: Let us *set to the Profe*
tion of it with a Sense of God's Authority, and
a Regard to his Glory. Let us avoid *a Dream*
Sluggish, Indolent Temper, which *nods over its W*
and does only *the Business of one Hour* in Two or Th
In Opposition to this, which runs thro' the Life of so
People, who yet think they are *never idle*, let us endeav
to *dispatch* as much as we well can *in a little Time*; c
sidering, that it is *but a little* we have in all. And
us be habitually sensible of *the Need* we have *of the*
vine Blessing, to make our Labours successful,

§. 14. (3.) For *Seasons of Diversion*: Let us
Care, that *our Recreations* be *well chosen*; that they
pursued *with a good Intention*, to fit us for a renewed
plication to the Labours of Life; and thus, that
be only used *in Subordination to the Honour of* G

(b) Psal. cix. 7.

great End of all our Actions. Let us take Heed, our Hearts be not *eſtranged from GOD* by them; that they do not take up *too much of our Time*: Always remembring, that the Faculties of the *Human Nature*, and the Advantages of the *Chriſtian Revelation*, *are not given us in vain*; but that we are *always to be in Purſuit* of ſome great and honourable *End*, and to indulge ourſelves in *Amuſements* and *Diverſions* no farther, than as they may make a Part in a Scheme of rational and manly, benevolent and pious Conduct.

§. 15. (4.) For the *Obſervation of Providences*: It will be uſeful to regard *the Divine Interpoſition*, in our *Comforts*, and in *our Afflictions*. — In *our Comforts*, whether more common, or extraordinary: That we find ourſelves in continued Health; that we are furniſhed with Food for Support and Pleaſure; that we have ſo many agreeable Ways of employing our Time; that we have ſo many Friends, and thoſe ſo good, and ſo happy; that our Buſineſs goes on proſperouſly; that we go out and come in ſafely; and that we enjoy Compoſure and Chearfulneſs of Spirit, without which nothing elſe could be enjoyed: *All theſe* ſhould be regarded as *Providential Favours*, and *due Acknowledgements* ſhould be *made to GOD* in theſe Accounts, as we paſs thro' ſuch agreeable Scenes. — On the other Hand, *Providence* is to be regarded in every *Diſappointment*, in every *Loſs*, in every *Pain*, in every *Inſtance of Unkindneſs* from thoſe who have profeſſed Friendſhip; and we ſhould endeavour to argue ourſelves into *a patient Submiſſion*, from this Conſideration, that *the Hand of GOD* is always *mediately*, if not *immediately*, in each of them, and that if they are not properly *the Work of Providence*, they are at leaſt *under Direction*. It is a Reflection, which we ſhould particularly make with Relation to thoſe *little croſs Accidents*, (as we are ready to call them,) and thoſe *Infirmities* and *Follies* in the Temper and Conduct of our intimate Friends, which may elſe be ready to diſcompoſe us. And it is the more neceſſary to *guard our Minds here*, becauſe wiſe and good Men often loſe the Command of themſelves on theſe *comparatively little Occaſions*; who call up Reaſon and Religion to their Aſſiſtance, ſtand

the Shock of *great Calamities* with Fortitude and R
lution.

§. 16. (5.) For *Watchfulness against Temptation*
is necessary, when changing our Place, or our Emp
ment, to reflect, "What *Snares* attend me here?"
as this should be *our habitual Care*, so we should es
ally *guard against those Snares* which in the Mor
we foresaw. And when we are entering on those
cumstances in which we expected *the Assault*, we sh
reflect, especially if it be a Matter of great Import
"Now *the Combat* is going to begin: Now G
"and the *Blessed Angels* are observing, what *Conse*
"what *Fortitude* there is in my Soul; and how fa
"*Divine Authority*, and the Remembrance of my
"*Prayers* and *Resolutions* will weigh with me, wh
"comes to a Trial."

§. 17. (6.) For *Dependance on Divine Grace and*
fluence: It must be *universal*; and as we always
it, we must *never forget* that Necessity. *A M*
spent in humble fervent *Breathings* after the Com
cations of the *Divine Assistance* may do *more Good*,
many Minutes spent in *mere Reasonings*: And tho' i
this should not be neglected, since *the Light of R*
is a Kind of *Divine Illumination*; yet still it ough
be pursued in a due Sense of *our Dependance* on
Father of Lights, or where we *think ourselves* w
we may *become vain in our Imaginations* (c). Let us t
fore always *call upon GOD*; and say, for Instance, wh
are going to *pray*, "Lord, *fix my Attention*: A
"my holy Affections, and *pour out upon me the Spi*
"*Grace and of Supplication* (d)!" When taki
the Bible, or any other good Book, "*Open Thou*
"*Eyes, that I may behold wondrous Things out of*
"*Law* (e)! Enlighten *mine Understanding*! Wr
"*Heart*! May *my good Resolutions* be confirmed
"all the *Course of my Life* in a proper Manner
"lated!" When addressing ourselves to any *work*
siness, "Lord, *prosper Thou the Work of mine*
"*upon me* (f), and give *Thy Blessing* to my hon
"deavours!" When going to any Kind of *Rec*
"

(c) Rom. i. 21, 22. (d) Zech. xii. 10. (e) Psal.
(f) Psal. xc. 17.

Lord, *bleſs my Refreſhments!* let me *not forget Thee* in them, but ſtill keep *Thy Glory* in View!" When ing into *Company*, "Lord, may I *do*, and *get Good!* *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of my Mouth, but that which is good to the Uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter Grace to the Hearers* (g)!" When enter- upon *Difficulties*, "Lord, give me *that Wiſdom*, which *is profitable to direct* (h)! *Teach me Thy Way, and lead me in a plain Path* (i)!" When encounter- with *Temptations*, "Let *Thy Strength*, Oh gracious Redeemer, *be made perfect in my Weakneſs* (k)!" eſe Inſtances may illuſtrate *the Deſign of this Direction*, they be far from a compleat Enumeration of all the cumſtances in which it is to be regarded.

§. 18. (7.) For the *Government* of *our Thoughts in Soli-e*: Let us accuſtom ourſelves, on all Occaſions, to ex-iſe *a due Command over our Thoughts*. Let us take e of thoſe Entanglements of *Paſſion*, and thoſe At-ments to any *preſent Intereſt* and View, which would ay *our Power over them*. Let us ſet before us *ſome* table *Subject* of Thought: Such as, the Perfections he Bleſſed *GOD*, the Love of *Chriſt*, the Value of *l*, the Certainty and Importance of *Death* and *Judg-t*, and of the *Eternity of Happineſs* or *Miſery* which o follow. Let us alſo at ſuch Intervals *reflect*, on what have obſerved as to *the State of our own Souls*, Regard to the Advance or Decline of *Religion*; or on *laſt Sermon* we have heard, or *the laſt Portion of Scrip-* we have read. You may perhaps, in this Connection, recollect what I have (if I remember right,) propoſed ou in Converſation; that it might be *very uſeful* to ſe-*ſome one Verſe of Scripture*, which we had met with *in Morning*, and to treaſure it up in our Mind, reſolving *bink of that* at any Time when we are *at a Loſs* for ter of pious Reflection, in any Intervals of Leiſure entering upon it. *This* will often be *as a Spring*, from nce *many profitable* and *delightful Thoughts* may ariſe, ch perhaps we did not before ſee in that Connection Force. Or if it ſhould not be ſo, yet I am per-ed, it will be *much better* to repeat *the ſame Scrip-*

(g) Eph. iv. 29. 2 Cor. xii. 9. (h) Eccleſ. x. 10. (i) Pſal. xxvii. 11.

ture in our Mind an Hundred Times in a Day, *some pious Ejaculation* formed upon it, than to leave Thoughts at the Mercy of *all those various Trifles*, which may otherwise intrude upon us; *the Variety* of which will be far from making Amends for *their Vanity*.

§. 19. (8.) For the *Government* of *our Discourse in Company:* We should take great Care, that *nothing* escape us, which can *expose us*, or our *Christian Profession*, to Censure and Reproach: Nothing *injurious* those that are absent, or to those that are present; nothing *malignant*, nothing *insincere*; nothing which may *corrupt*, nothing which may *provoke*, nothing which may *mislead* those about us. Nor should we, by any means be *content*, that what we say is *innocent*; it should be *our Desire*, that it may be *edifying*, to ourselves and others. In this View, we should endeavour to have *some Subject of useful Discourse* always ready; in which we may be assisted by *the Hints* given, about *Furniture for Thought* under the *former Head*. We should watch for decent Opportunities of *introducing useful Reflections*, and if a pious Friend *attempt to do it*, we should endeavour to *second it* immediately. When the Conversation does not *turn directly* on *Religious Subjects*, we should endeavour to *make it improving* some other Way: We should reflect on *the Character* and *Capacities* of the *Company*, that we may lead them to *talk* of what they *understand best*; for their Discourses on those Subjects will probably be *most pleasing to themselves*, as well as *most useful to us*. And in *Pauses of Discourse*, it may be improper to *lift up an holy Ejaculation* to God, that his Grace may assist *us* and *our Friends* in our Endeavours to *do Good* to each other; that *all we say*, and *do*, may be *worthy the Character* of *reasonable Creatures* and of *Christians*.

§. 20. [III.] The *Directions* for a religious Close *of the Day*, which I shall here mention, are only *Two*. ——Let us see to it, that *the secret Duties of the Evening* be *well performed*;——and let us *lie down on our Beds in a pious Frame*.

§. 21. (1.) For *secret Devotion in the Evening* I would propose *a Method some thing different* from that *in the Morning*; but still, as then, with due Allowance

Circumstances, which may make unthought of Al-
tions proper. I should, *Sir*, advise to *read a Por-
of Scripture* in the first Place, with *suitable Reflec-
*, and *Prayer*, as above: Then to read *a Hymn*, or
m: After this to enter on *Self-Examination*, to be
wed by *a longer Prayer*, than that which followed
ding, to be *formed* on this *Review of the Day*. In
Address to the Throne of Grace it will be *highly pro-*
, to intreat that GOD would pardon the Omissions and
nces of the Day; to praise Him for Mercies Temporal
Spiritual; to recommend ourselves to his Protection
the ensuing Night; with proper Petitions for others,
m we ought to bear on our Hearts before him; and
icularly, for those Friends with whom we have con-
ed or corresponded, in the preceding Day. Many
r Concerns will occur, both in *Morning* and *Evening*
yer, which I have not here hinted at; but I did not ap-
end, that *a full Enumeration* of these Things belonged,
ny Means, to our present Purpose.

§. 22. BEFORE I quit *this Head*, I must take the
erty to remind you, that *Self-Examination* is so *im-
tant a Duty*, that it will be worth our while to spend
w Words upon it. And this Branch of it is *so easy*,
when we have *proper Questions* before us, any Person
common Understanding may hope to *go thro' it
h Advantage* under a Divine Blessing. I offer you
fore *the following Queries*, which I hope you will,
h such Alterations as you may judge requisite, keep
you *for daily Use*. "Did I *wake* as *with* GOD
his Morning, and *rise* with a *grateful Sense* of his
Goodness? How were *the secret Devotions of the Morn-
g* performed? Did I offer *my solemn Praises*, and
enew *the Dedication of myself* to GOD, with becom-
g *Attention* and suitable *Affections*? Did I lay my
cheme for *the Business of the Day* wisely and well?
How did I *read the Scripture*, or any other *Devotio-
al* or *Practical Piece*, which I might afterwards
eview? Did it *do my Heart good*, or was it *a mere
Amusement*?——How have the other *stated Devotions
f the Day* been attended, whether *in the Family*, or
n *Publick*? Have I pursued *the common Business of
his Day* with Diligence, and Spirituality; doing

" every Thing *in Season*, and with *all convenient* [*D*]
" *patch*, and *as unto the Lord* (l)? What *Time* ha[*s*]
" *loſt* this Day, in *the Morning*, or *the Forenoon*,
" *the Afternoon*, or the *Evening*;" (for theſe D[*i*]ſions will aſſiſt your Recollection;) " and *what*
" *occaſioned* the Loſs of it? With what *Temper*,
" under what *Regulations*, have *the Recreations of*
" *Day* been purſued? Have I ſeen *the Hand of G*[*od*]
" *in my Mercies*, Health, Chearfulneſs, Food, C[*lo*]ing, Books, Preſervation in Journies, Succeſs of
" ſineſs, Converſation and Kindneſs of Friends,
" Have I ſeen it *in Afflictions*, and particularly *in*
" *Things* which had a Tendency to vex and diſquiet
" And with Regard to this Interpoſition, have I
" ceived *my Comforts* thankfully, and *my Afflictions*
" miſſively? How have I guarded againſt *the Te*[*m*]
" *tions of the Day*, particularly againſt *this* or
" Temptation, which I foreſaw in the Morning? H[*ow*]
" I maintained *an humble Dependance* on *Divine I*[*n*]
" *ences*? Have I *lived by Faith in the Son of GOD*
" and *regarded Chriſt* this Day, as my Teacher and
" vernour, my Atonement and Interceſſor, my Exa[*m*]
" and Guardian, my Strength and Forerunner? Ha[*ve*]
" been *looking forward* to *Death* and *Eternity* this D[*ay*]
" and conſidered myſelf *as a Probationer for Hea*[*ven*]
" and thro' Grace *an Expectant of it*? Have I *gov*[*er*]
" *my Thoughts well*, eſpecially in ſuch or ſuch an I[*n*]
" val of *Solitude*? How was *my Subject of Th*[*ought*]
" this Day *choſen*, and how was it *regarded*? Ha[*ve*]
" *governed my Diſcourſes well*, in ſuch and ſuch C[*om*]
" *pany*? Did I ſay nothing paſſionate, miſchie[*vous*]
" ſlanderous, imprudent, impertinent? Has *my H*[*eart*]
" this Day *been full of Love* to *GOD*, and to *all M*[*en*]
" *kind*; and have I ſought, and found, and impr[*oved*]
" *Opportunities of doing*, and of *getting Good*?——
" what *Attention* and *Improvement* have I *read the S*[*cri*]
" *ture this Evening*? How was *Self-Examination* p[*er*]
" formed *the laſt Night*; and how have I *profited*
" *Day* by any *Remarks* I then made *on former I*[*n*]
" *gences* and *Miſtakes*? With *what Temper* did I
" *lie down*, and compoſe myſelf *to Sleep*?"

§. 23.

(l) Col. iii. 23. (m) Gal. ii. 20.

§. 23. You will eaſily ſee, *Sir*, that *theſe Queſtions* are ſo adjuſted, as to be *an Abridgment* of the *moſt material Advices* I have given *in this Letter*; and I believe I need not, to a Perſon of your Underſtanding, ſay any Thing *as to the Uſefulneſs* of ſuch Enquiries. *Conſcience* will *anſwer them* in *a few Minutes*; but if you think them *too large* and *particular*, you may make *a ſtill ſhorter Abſtract* for daily Uſe, and *reſerve theſe* for Seaſons of *more than ordinary Exactneſs in Review*, which I hope will occur at leaſt *once a Week*. *Secret Devotion* being thus performed, before *Drowſineſs* render us unfit for it, *the Interval* between *that* and our *going to Reſt* muſt be conducted by *the Rules* mentioned under the *Second Head*. And nothing will farther remain to be conſidered here, but

§. 24. (2.) The *Sentiments*, with which we ſhould *lie down*, and compoſe ourſelves *to Sleep*. Now here it is obviouſly *ſuitable*, to think of the *Divine Goodneſs*, in adding *another Day* and the *Mercies of it*, to the former Days and Mercies of our Life; to take notice of the *Indulgence of Providence*, in giving us *commodious Habitations* and *eaſy Beds*, and continuing to us *ſuch Health of Body*, that we can lay ourſelves down at Eaſe upon them, and *ſuch Serenity of Mind*, as leaves us any Room to hope for refreſhing Sleep: *A Refreſhment* to be ſought, not merely as an Indulgence to Animal Nature, but as what *our wiſe Creator*, in order to *keep us humble* in the midſt of ſo many Infirmities, has been *pleaſed to make neceſſary* to our being able to purſue his Service with renewed Alacrity. Thus may *our ſleeping*, as well as *our waking Hours*, be in ſome Senſe *devoted to* GOD. And when we are juſt going to reſign ourſelves to *the Image of Death*, to what one of the Ancients beautifully calls *its leſſer Myſteries*, it is alſo evidently *proper*, to think ſeriouſly of *that End of all the Living*, and to renew thoſe Actings of *Repentance* and *Faith*, which we ſhould judge *neceſſary*, if we were *to wake no more* here. You have once, *Sir*, ſeen *a Meditation of that Kind* in my Hand: I will *tranſcribe it* for you *in the Poſtſcript*; and therefore ſhall *add no more* to *this Head*, but here put a Cloſe to *the Directions* you deſired.

§. 25. I am

§. 25. I AM perſuaded, *the moſt important of the*
have, in one Form or another, *been long regarded* by you
and made *governing Maxims* of your Life. I ſha
greatly rejoice, if the *Review of theſe*, and the *Exam*
nation and *Trial of the reſt*, may be the Means of lead
ing you into *more intimate Communion with GOD*, an
ſo of rendering *your Life more pleaſant* and *uſefu*
and *your Eternity*, whenever that is to commence, *mo*
glorious. There is not *a Human Creature* upon Earth
whom I ſhould not *delight to ſerve* in theſe importan
Intereſts; but I can faithfully *aſſure you*, that I am
with particular Reſpect,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate Friend and Servan

§. 26. THIS, Reader, with the Alteration of a very fe
Words, is *the Letter* I wrote to *a worthy Friend*, no
I doubt not *with GOD*, about *Sixteen Years ago*: An
I can aſſuredly ſay, that *the Experience* of *each of the*
Years has confirmed me in theſe Views, and eſtabliſh
me in the Perſuaſion, that *one Day thus ſpent* is prefer
ble to *whole Years* of *Senſuality*, and the *Neglect of R*
ligion. I choſe to inſert *the Letter as it is*, becauſe
thought *the Freedom* and *Particularity* of the *Advi*
I had given in it, would appear *moſt natural* in its o
ginal Form: And as I propoſe to *inforce theſe Advi*
in the *next Chapter*, I ſhall *conclude this* with *that M*
ditation, which I promiſed my Friend *as a Poſtſcript*; a
which I could wiſh you, to make *ſo familiar to yourſe*
as that you might be able to *recollect the Subſtance of*
whenever you *compoſe yourſelf to Sleep*.

A ſerious VIEW OF DEATH, *proper to be taken a*
lie down on our Beds.

" OH my Soul, *look forward a little* with Seri
" neſs and Attention, and *learn Wiſdom* by
" *Conſideration of thy latter End*(n). Another of
" mortal Days is *now numbered* and *finiſhed*: And

(n) Deut. xxxii. 29.

have *put off my Clothes*, and laid myself *upon my Bed*, for the Repose of the Night; so will *the Day of Life* quickly *come to its Period*, so must *the Body itself* be *put off*, and laid to its Repose *in a Bed of Dust*. There *let it rest*; for it will be *no more regarded by me*, than *the Clothes* which I have *now laid aside*. I have another *far more important Concern* to attend. Think, Oh my Soul, *when Death comes*, thou art to *enter upon the Eternal World*, and to be *fixed* either *in Heaven* or *in Hell*. All the *Schemes* and *Cares*, the *Hopes* and *Fears*, the *Pleasures* and *Sorrows of Life*, will come to *their Period*, and the *World of Spirits* will *open upon thee*. And Oh, *how soon* may it *open!* Perhaps *before the returning Sun* bring on *the Light* of another Day. *To-Morrow's Sun* may *not enlighten mine Eyes*, but only shine round *a senseless Corpse*, which may lie in the Place of *this animated Body*. At least *the Death of many* in the Flower of their Age, and *many* who were *superior to me* in Capacity, Piety, and the Prospects of Usefulness, may *loudly warn me* not to depend on *a long Life*, and engage me *rather to wonder* that I am *continued here* so many Years, *than to be surprized* if I am *speedily removed*.

" And now, Oh my Soul, *answer* as in the Sight of GOD; *Art thou ready?* Art thou *ready?* Is there *no Sin unforsaken*, and so *unrepented of*, to fill me with *Anguish* in my *departing Moments*, and *make me tremble* on the *Brink of Eternity?* Dread to remain *under the Guilt of it*, and this Moment *renew thy most earnest Applications* to the *Mercy of GOD*, and the *Blood of a Redeemer*, for *Deliverance from it*.

" But if *the great Account* be *already adjusted*, if thou hast cordially *repented of thy numerous Offences*, if thou hast sincerely *committed thyself* by Faith *into the Hands of the Blessed Jesus*, and *hast not renounced thy Covenant with Him* by returning to the allowed Practice of Sin, then *start not at the Thoughts of a Separation:* It is not *in the Power of Death*, to *hurt* a *Soul* devoted to *GOD*, and united to *the great Redeemer*. It may *take me from my worldly Comforts*, it may *disconcert* and *break my Schemes for Service* on Earth; but, Oh my Soul, *diviner Entertainments*,

" and

" and *nobler Services* wait thee beyond the Grave. *F*
" *ever blessed be the Name of* GOD, and *the Love*
" *Jesus*, for these quieting, encouraging, joyful View
" *Father, into Thine Hand I commend my Spirit* (o); f
" *Thou hast redeemed me, Oh* GOD *of Truth* (p), a
" therefore I can chearfully *refer it to Thy Choice*, wh
" ther *I shall wake*, in *this World*, or *another*."

(o) Luke xxiii. 45. (p) Psal. xxxi. 5.

CHA

CHAP. XX.

A ſerious Perſuaſive to ſuch a Method of ſpending our Days, as is repreſented in the former Chapter.

Chriſtians fix their Views too low, and indulge too indolent a Diſpoſition, which makes it more neceſſary to urge ſuch a Life, as that under Conſideration. §. 1, 2. *It is therefore inforced,* (1.) *From its being apparently Reaſonable, conſidering ourſelves as the Creatures of* GOD, *and as redeemed by the Blood of Chriſt.* §. 3. (2.) *From its evident Tendency to conduce to our Comfort in Life.* §. 4. (3.) *From the Influence it will have to promote our Uſefulneſs to others.* §. 5. (4.) *From its Efficacy to make Afflictions lighter.* §. 6. (5.) *From its happy Aſpect on Death:* §. 7. *And,* (6.) *On Eternity.* §. 8. *Whereas not to deſire Improvement would argue a Soul deſtitute of Religion.* §. 9. *A Prayer ſuited to the State of a Soul, who longs to attain the Life recommended above.*

1. I HAVE been aſſigning, in the *preceding Chapter*, what I fear will ſeem to *ſome* of my Readers *hard a Taſk*, that they will *want Courage to attempt* ; and it is indeed *a Life* in many Reſpects *ſo far above* t of the *Generality of Chriſtians*, that I am not with- Apprehenſions, that *many*, who deſerve the Name, y think *the Directions* carried to an *unneceſſary Degree* Nicety and Strictneſs. But I fear, much of *the Credit* Comfort of *Chriſtianity* is loſt, in Conſequence of Profeſſors fixing *their Aims too low*, and not conceiv- of *their high and holy Calling* in ſo elevated and ſub- a View, as the *Genius of Religion* would require, the *Word of* GOD would direct. I am fully con-

vinced,

vinced, that the Expressions of *walking with* GOD, *being in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long* (a), above all, that of *loving the Lord our* GOD *with all Heart, and Soul, and Mind, and Strength* (b), must quire, if not all these Circumstances, yet *the Substance all* that I have been recommending, so far as we *Leisure* and *Opportunity:* And I cannot but think, *many* might have *more of that,* if they would tak *due Care* in the Government of themselves; if would give up *vain* and *unnecessary Diversions,* and tain *Indulgences* which only suit and delight *the Part of our Nature,* and to say the best of them, *us of Pleasures* much better than themselves, if the not *plunge us into Guilt.* Many of *these Rules* appear *easily practicable,* if Men would learn to *the Value of Time,* and particularly to *redeem it unnecessary Sleep,* which wastes many golden Hour the Day: *Hours,* in which many of GOD's Serv are *delighting themselves in Him,* and *drinking in* Draughts of *the Water of Life*; while these *their thren* are *slumbering upon their Beds,* and lost *in Dreams,* as far below the common Entertainments Rational Creature, as the Pleasures of the sublimest votion are above them.

§. 2. I KNOW likewise, that *the Mind* is very and *inconstant*; and that it is *a hard Thing* to pre *such a Government* and *Authority over our Thoughts* would be *very desirable,* and as *the Plan* I have laid *will require.* But so much of *the Honour of* GOD, much of *your own true Happiness* depends upon it, I beg you will give me *a patient* and *attentive Hea* while I am *pleading with you*; and that you will onsly *examine the Arguments,* and then *judge,* wh *a Care* and *Conduct* like that which I have advised not *in itself reasonable*; and whether it will not be *conducive* to your *Comfort* and *Usefulness in Life, Peace in Death,* and the *Advancement* and *Increase* your *Eternal Glory.*

§. 3. LET Conscience say, whether *such a Life,* described above, be not *in itself highly Reasonable.* over *the Substance of it* again, and bring it under a

Ex

(a) Prov. xxiii. 17. (b) Mark xii. 30.

mination; for I am very apprehenſive, that *ſome* *Objections* may ariſe againſt *the whole*, which may *eir* Conſequences affect *particulars* againſt which no *mable* Man would preſume to make *any Objection* at *Recollect*, and carry it with you in your Memory your Heart, while you are purſuing this Review, that are *the Creature of GOD*, that you are *purchaſed* *the Blood of Jeſus*; and then ſay, Whether *theſe* *tions* in which you ſtand, do not demand *all that* *cation* and *Reſolution* which I would engage you to. *poſe all the Counſels* I have given, *reduced into Prac-* Suppoſe *every Day begun* and *concluded* with ſuch *t Breathings* after GOD, and ſuch *holy Retirements* *Morning* and *Evening Converſe* with Him and with own Heart: Suppoſe *a daily Care*, in contriving *your Time* may be managed, and in reflecting how *s* been employed: Suppoſe this *Regard to GOD*, *Senſe of his Preſence*, and *Zeal for his Glory*, to run your *Acts of Worſhip*, your *Hours of Buſineſs* and *ration:* Suppoſe this *Attention to Providence*, this *rd againſt Temptations*, this *Dependance upon Divine* *nce*, this *Government of the Thoughts* in Solitude, *of the Diſcourſes* in Company: Nay, I will add far- ſuppoſe *every particular Direction* given, to be *pur-* excepting when *particular Caſes* occur, with re- to which you ſhall be able in Conſcience to ſay, wave it, *not from Indolence* and *Careleſsneſs*, but be- ſe I think it will juſt now *be more pleaſing to GOD* be *doing ſomething elſe*;" which may *often happen* uman Life, where *general Rules* are beſt concerted: oſe, I ſay, *all this* to be done, *not for a Day*, or *k*, but *thro' the Remainder of Life*, whether longer rter; and ſuppoſe *this* to be *reviewed at the Cloſe* *fe*, in the full Exerciſe of your rational Faculties: there be *Reaſon to ſay* in the Reflection, "I have ken *too much Pains* in Religion: The Author of my *ng did not deſerve all this* from me: *Leſs Diligence*, *Fidelity*, leſs *Zeal* than this, might have been *an* *ivalent* for *the Blood which was ſhed* for my Re- mption: *A Part of my Heart*, a Part of *my Time*, Part of *my Labours*, might have *ſufficed for him*, o hath given me all my Powers; *for him*, who

" has delivered me from that Deſtruction, which w
" have made them my everlaſting Torment; *for*
" who is raiſing me to the Regions of a bliſsful Im
" tality." *Can you* with any Face *ſay this?* If
cannot, then ſurely *your Conſcience bears Witneſs*,
all I have recommended *is reaſonable*; that *Duty*
Gratitude require it; and conſequently, that by e
allowed Failure in it, you *bring Guilt* upon your
Soul, you *offend GOD*, and act *unworthy your Chri*
Profeſſion.

§. 4. I INTREAT you farther to conſider, Whe
ſuch a Conduct as I have now been recommend
would not *conduce much* to your *Comfort* and *Uſefu*
in Life. Reflect ſeriouſly, *What is true Happineſs?* I
it conſiſt *in Diſtance from GOD*, or *in Nearneſs to H*
Surely you cannot be *a Chriſtian*, ſurely you canno
a rational Man, if you doubt, whether *Communion*
the great *Father of our Spirits* be a *Pleaſure* and *Feli*
And *if it be*, then ſurely they *enjoy moſt of it*, who
Him moſt conſtantly in View. You cannot but kno
your own Conſcience, that it is *this* which make
Happineſs of Heaven; and therefore *the more of it*
Man enjoys upon Earth, *the more of Heaven* comes
into his Soul. If you have made *any Trial of Reli*
tho' it be but *a few Months* or *Weeks* ſince you *firſ*
came *acquainted with it*, you muſt be *ſome Judge*
upon your own Experience, *which* have been *the*
pleaſant Days of your Life? Have they not been
in which you have *acted moſt* upon theſe Princi
thoſe, in which you have moſt ſteadily and reſol
carried them thro' every Hour of Time, and every
cumſtance of Life? The *Check*, which you muſt in
Inſtances give to your own Inclinations, might ſeem
agreeable; but it would ſurely be *overballanced*, in a
happy Manner, *by the Satisfaction* you would find
Conſciouſneſs of *Self-Government*; in having *ſuch a*
mand of your *Thoughts*, *Affections*, and *Actions*,
much more glorious than any *Authority over others* ca

§. 5. I WOULD alſo intreat you to conſider *the*
ence, which *ſuch a Conduct as this* might have
Happineſs of others: And it it eaſy to be ſeen, it
be *very great*; as you would find your Heart *alway*

ed to watch *every Opportunity of doing Good*, and to seize with Eagerness and Delight. It would engage you to make the *Study* and *Business of your Life*, to order Things in such a Manner, that *the End of one kind and useful Action* might be *the Beginning of another*; in which you would run as naturally, as *the inferior Animals* do in those Functions and Actions by which Mankind are relieved and enriched, or as *the Earth* bears her successive Crops of different vegetable Supplies. And tho' *Mankind* be, *in a corrupt State*, so unhappily *inclined* to imitate *evil Examples* rather than *good*; yet it may be expected, that while *your Light shines before Men*, some *seeing your good Works* will endeavour to *transcribe them* in their own Lives, and so to *glorify your Father which is in Heaven* (c). The Charm of such *beautiful Models* would surely *impress some*, and incline them at least to *attempt an Imitation*; and every Attempt would dispose to another. And then, thro' the Divine Goodness, *you* might be *intitled to a Share* in the *Praise*, and the *Reward*, not only of *the Good* you had immediately *done yourself*, but likewise *of that* which you had *engaged others to do*. And this, but that of an *all-searching GOD*, can *see*, into *distant Times* or *Places* the blessed *Consequences* may run. In every Instance in which *these Consequences* occur, it will put *a generous* and *sublime Joy* into your Heart, which *no worldly Prosperity* could afford, and which would be *the liveliest Emblem* of *that high Delight* with the *Blessed GOD feels*, in *seeing* and *making* his Creatures *happy*.

6. It is true indeed, that, amidst all these pious and benevolent Cares, *Afflictions* may *come*, and in some Measure *interrupt you* in the Midst of your projected Views. But surely *these Afflictions* will *sit much lighter*, while your Heart is *gladdened* with the *peaceful* and *joyful Reflection* of your own Mind, and with *so honourable a Testimony of Conscience* before God and Man. *Delightful* will it be, *to go back to past Scenes* in your pleasing Review, and *to think*, that you have not only been *humbling yourself* for those *past Offences*, which now may *bring to your Remembrance*; but that you have given *substantial Proofs* of the *Sincerity* of *that Humiliation*,

(c) Mat. v. 16.

miliation, by a real *Reformation* of what has been am
and by *acting* with ſtrenuous and vigorous Reſolut
on the contrary Principle. And while *Converſe* w
GOD, and *doing Good to Men*, are made *the great Bu*
and *Pleaſure of Life*, you will find a Thouſand *Oppor*
nities of Enjoyment, even in the Midſt of *thoſe Affli*
which would render you ſo incapable of *reliſhing*
Pleaſures of Senſe, that the very *Mention of them* m
in thoſe Circumſtances *ſeem an Inſult* and *a Reproach*.

§. 7. At length, *Death* will *come*: That *ſolemn*
important Hour, which hath been *paſſed thro'* by *ſo*
Thouſands, who have in the Main *lived ſuch a Life*,
by *ſo many Millions*, who have *neglected it*. And
Conſcience ſay, if there was ever *any one of all*
Millions, who had *then* any Reaſon to *rejoice in*
Neglect; or *any one*, among the *moſt ſtrict* and *exem*
Chriſtians, who *then lamented* that his Heart and
had been too *zealouſly devoted* to God? Let Conſci
ſay, whether *they have wiſhed* to have *a Part of*
Time, which they have thus employed, *given bac*
them again, that they might be *more conformed to*
World; that they might *plunge themſelves deeper* in
Amuſements, or *purſue its Honours*, its *Poſſeſſions*,
Pleaſures, with *greater Eagerneſs* than they had done
you were *yourſelf dying*, and a dear *Friend* or *Child*
near you, and *this Book* and the *laſt Chapter of it* f
chance to *come into your Thoughts*, would you *caution*
Friend or *Child* againſt *conducting himſelf by ſuch*
as I have advanced? The *Queſtion* may perhaps *ſeem*
neceſſary, where *the Anſwer* is *ſo plain* and *ſo cer*
Well then, let me beſeech you, to learn *how you*
live, by reflecting *how you would die*, and *wh*
Courſe you would *wiſh to look back upon*, when yo
juſt quitting this World, and entering upon ano
Think ſeriouſly; what if *Death* ſhould ſurprize
a ſudden, and you ſhould be called into Eternity
Hour's or *a Minute's Warning*, would you not *wi*
your laſt Day ſhould have been *thus begun*, and *the*
of it, if it were a Day of Health and Activity,
have been *thus managed*? Would you not *wiſh*
your Lord ſhould *find you engaged* in *ſuch Thoughts*
in *ſuch Purſuits*? Would not *the Paſſage*, the

from Earth to Heaven, be *most easy, most pleasant*, in this View and Connection? And on the other hand, If *Death* should make *more gradual Approaches*, would not *the Remembrance of such a* pious, holy, humble, diligent, and useful *Life*, make *a dying Bed much softer* and *easier*, than it would otherwise be? You would not die, *depending upon these Things: GOD forbid*, that you should! Sensible of your *many Imperfections*, you would, no doubt, desire to *throw yourselves at the Feet of Christ*, that you might appear before GOD, *clothed with his Righteousness*, and *washed in his Blood*. You would also with your dying Breath *ascribe* to the Riches of his Grace *every good Disposition* you had found in your Heart, and *every worthy Action* you had been enabled to perform. But would it not give you *a Delight* worthy of being purchased with Ten Thousand Worlds, *to reflect*, that *his Grace bestowed upon you had not been in vain* (d); but that *you had*, from an humble Principle of grateful Love, *glorified your Heavenly Father on Earth*, and in some Degree, tho' not with the Perfection you could desire, *finished the Work which he had given you to do* (e): That you had been *living* for many past Years *as on the Borders of Heaven*, and endeavouring to form your Heart and Life *to the Temper and Manners* of its Inhabitants?

§. 8. AND once more, Let me intreat you to *reflect on the View* you will have *of this Matter*, when you *enter into a World of Glory*, if (which I hope will be the happy Case,) Divine Mercy conduct you thither, Will not *your Reception there* be affected by *your Care*, or *Negligence*, in *this holy Course?* Will it appear *an indifferent Thing* in the Eye of *the Blessed Jesus*, who distributes *the Crowns*, and allots *the Thrones there*, whether you have been among *the most zealous*, or *the most slothful* of his Servants? Surely you must *wish*, to have *an Entrance administred unto you abundantly, into the Kingdom of your Lord and Saviour* (f): And what can more certainly conduce to it, than to be *always abounding in his Work* (g)? You cannot *think so meanly* of that glorious State, as to imagine, that you shall *there* look round about with a *secret Disappointment*, and say in

(d) 1 Cor. xv. 10. (e) John xvii. 4.
(f) 2 Pet. i. 11. (g) 1 Cor. xv. 58.

your Heart, that you *overvalued* the *Inheritance* y
have received, and *pursued it* with *too much Earnestn*
You will not surely *complain*, that it had *too many*
your *Thoughts* and *Cares:* But on the contrary, y
have the higheſt Reaſon to *believe*, that if *any Thi*
were capable of *exciting* your *Indignation* and your *Gr*
there, it would be, that amidſt *ſo many Motives*, and
many Advantages, you *exerted yourſelf no more* in the Pr
ſecution of *ſuch a Prize*.

§. 9. But I will not enlarge on *ſo clear a Caſe*, a
therefore *conclude the Chapter* with reminding you, t
to allow yourſelf deliberately *to ſit down ſatisfied* w
any *imperfect Attainments in Religion*, and to look up
a more confirmed and *improved State of it* as what y
do not deſire, nay, as what you *ſecretly reſolve* that y
will not purſue; is one of the *moſt fatal Signs* we c
well imagine, that you are *an entire Stranger* to the
Principles of it.

A Prayer *ſuited to the State of a Soul, who deſire*
attain the Life recommended above.

" Blessed God, I cannot *contradict* the Fo
" of *theſe Reaſonings:* Oh that I might *feel*
" *than ever* the *laſting Effects* of them! Thou art
" *great Fountain* of *Being*, and of *Happineſs*; and
" from Thee *my Being* was *derived*, ſo from Thee
" *Happineſs* directly *flows*; and *the nearer* I am *to T*
" the *purer* and the *more delicious* is the *Stream*. *W*
" *Thee is the Fountain of Life*; *in Thy Light* may I
" *Light* (h)! The great Object of *my final Hope* is to *b*
" *for ever* with Thee. Give me now *ſome Foretaſt*
" *that Delight!* Give me, I beſeech Thee, to experi
" *the Bleſſedneſs of that Man, who feareth the L*
" *and who delighteth greatly in His Commandments*
" and ſo *form my Heart* by Thy Grace, that I
" *be in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long* (k)!
" To Thee may *my awakening Thoughts* be direct
" and with the firſt Ray of Light that viſits mine o
" ing Eyes, *lift up, Oh Lord, the Light of Thy Co*
"

(h) Pſal. xxxvi. 9. (i) Pſal. cxii. 1. (k) Prov. xxi

nance upon me (l)! When my Faculties are *roused* from that *broken State*, in which they lay, while *buried*, and as it were *annihilated in Sleep*, may *my first Actions* be *consecrated* to Thee, Oh GOD, who *givest me Light*, who *givest me*, as it were, every Morning *a new Life* and *a new Reason*! Enable *my Heart* to *pour itself out before Thee*, with a filial Reverence, Freedom, and Endearment! And may I *hearken to* GOD, as I desire that He should *hearken unto me*! May *Thy Word be read* with Attention and Pleasure! May my Soul be *delivered into the Mold of it*, and may I *hide it in mine Heart, that I may not sin against Thee* (m)! Animated by the *great Motives* there suggested, may I *every Morning* be *renewing the Dedication of myself* to Thee, *thro' Jesus* Thy beloved Son; and be *deriving* from Him *new Supplies* of that *Blessed Spirit* of Thine, *whose Influences* are *the Life of my Soul*!

" And being *thus prepared*, do Thou, Lord, *lead me forth* by the Hand *to all the Duties* and *Events* of the Day! *In that Calling*, *wherein* Thou hast been pleased to *call me*, may I *abide* with Thee (n); *not* being *slothful in Business*, but *fervent in Spirit*, *serving the Lord* (o)! May I know *the Value of Time*, and always *improve it* to the best Advantage, *in such Duties* as Thou hast assigned me, *how low soever* they may seem, or *how painful soever* they may be! *To Thy Glory*, Oh Lord, may *the Labours of Life* be pursued; and *to Thy Glory* may *the Refreshments of it* be sought! *Whether I eat, or drink, or whatever I do* (p), may *that End* still *be pursued*, and may it *be attained*! And may *every Refreshment*, and *Release from Business*, prepare me to serve Thee *with greater Vigour* and *Resolution*!

" May *mine Eye* be watchful to observe *the Descent of Mercies* from Thee; and may *a grateful Sense* of *Thine Hand* in them *add a Savour* and *a Relish* to all! And when *Afflictions come*, which in a World like this I would accustom myself to expect, may I remember that *they come from Thee*; and may that *fully*

" *recon-*

(l) Psal. iv. 6. Rom. xii. 11. (m) Psal. cxix. 11. (n) 1 Cor. vii. 20. (p) 1 Cor. x. 31.

" *reconcile me* to them, while I firmly believe, that *th*
" *ſame Love* which gives us *our daily Bread*, appoints u
" *our daily Croſſes*; which I would learn to *take up*
" that I may *follow my dear Lord* (q), with *a Temper lik*
" *that* which He manifeſted, when aſcending *Calvar*
" for my Sake; ſaying like Him, *The Cup which m*
" *Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it* (r)? An
" when I *enter into Temptation*, do Thou, Lord, *deli*
" *ver me from Evil* (s)! Make me *ſenſible*, I intrea
" Thee, *of my own Weakneſs*, that my Heart may b
" *raiſed to Thee* for *preſent Communications* of propor
" tionable *Strength!* When I am engaged *in the Societ*
" *of others*, may it be *my Deſire* and my *Care*, that I
" may *do*, and *receive*, as much *Good* as poſſible; and
" may I continually *anſwer* the great *Purpoſes of Life*
" by honouring Thee, and diffuſing uſeful Knowledg
" and Happineſs in the World! And when I am *alone*
" may I remember *my Heavenly Father is with me*
" and may I *enjoy* the *Pleaſure of Thy Preſence*, an
" *feel* the animating *Power of it*, awakening my Soul
" to an earneſt Deſire *to think*, and *act*, as *in Th*
" *Sight!*

" THUS let *my Days be ſpent*: And let them always b
" *cloſed in Thy Fear*, and under *a Senſe* of *Thy gracio*
" *Preſence!* Meet me, Oh Lord, *in mine Evening Re*
" *tirements!* May I chuſe *the moſt proper Time* fo
" them; may I *diligently attend* to *Reading* and *Prayer*
" and when I *review my Conduct*, may I do it *wit*
" *an impartial Eye!* Let not *Self-love* ſpread *a falſ*
" *Colouring* over it; but may I *judge myſelf*, as one tha
" expects to be *judged of the Lord*, and is very ſolicitou
" he may be *approved by Thee*, who *ſearcheſt all Hearts*
" and *canſt not forget any of my Works* (t)! *Let m*
" *Prayer come* daily *before Thee as Incenſe*, and let *th*
" *lifting up of my Hands be as* the Morning and *the Even*
" *ing Sacrifice* (u)! May I *reſign* my Powers *to Sleep i*
" ſweet Calmneſs and Serenity; *conſcious* that I hav
" *lived to GOD* in the Day, and chearfully *perſuade*
" that I am *accepted of Thee in Chriſt Jeſus my Lor*
" and humbly *hoping in Thy Mercy thro' Him*, whethe
" *a*

(q) Mark viii. 34. (r) John xviii. 11. (s) Mat. vi. 1
(t) Amos viii. 7. (u) Pſal. cxli. 2.

" *my Days* on Earth *be prolonged*, or *the Residue of* " *them* be *cut off in the Midst* (x)! If *Death comes* " by a *leisurely Advance*, may it find me *thus em-* " *ployed*; and if I am *called on a sudden* to exchange " Worlds, may *my last Days* and *Hours* be found to " have been *conducted* by *such Maxims as these*; that " I may have *a sweet* and *easy Passage* from the *Services* " *of Time* to the infinitely *nobler Services* of an immor- " tal State! I ask it *thro' Him*, who while on Earth " was *the fairest Pattern* and *Example* of every Virtue " and Grace, and who now *lives* and *reigns* with Thee, " *able to save unto the uttermost* (y): To Him *having* " *done all* I would fly, with humble Acknowledgment " that I am *an unprofitable Servant* (z); *to Him be* " *Glory, for ever and ever.* Amen."

(x) Isai. xxxviii. 10. (y) Heb. vii. 25. (z) Luke xvii. 10.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

A Caution againſt various Temptations, by which the young Convert may be drawn aſide from the Courſe recommended above.

Dangers continue, after the firſt Difficulties (conſidered Chap. xvi.) *are broken thro'.* §. 1. *Particular Cautions,* (1.) *Againſt a ſluggiſh and indolent Temper.* §. 2. (2.) *Againſt the exceſſive Love of ſenſitive Pleaſure,* §. 3. *leading to a Neglect of Buſineſs and needleſs Expence.* §. 4. (3.) *Againſt the Snares of vain Company.* §. 5. (4.) *Againſt exceſſive Hurries of worldly Buſineſs;* §. 6. *which is inforced by the fatal Conſequences theſe have had in many Caſes.* §. 7. *The Chapter concludes with an Exhortation, to die to this World, and live to another:* §. 8. *And the young Convert's Prayer for Divine Protection againſt the Dangers ariſing from theſe Snares.*

§. 1. THE Repreſentation I have been making of *the Pleaſure* and *Advantage* of *a Life ſpent* in Devotedneſs to GOD and Communion with Him, as I have deſcribed it above, will I hope *engage you,* my dear Reader, to *form ſome Purpoſes,* and *make ſome Attempt* to obtain it. But from conſidering the Nature and obſerving the Courſe of Things, it appears exceedingly *evident,* that beſides *the general Oppoſition* which I formerly mentioned as *like to attend you* in your *firſt Entrance* on a *Religious Life,* you will find, even *after* you have reſolutely broken thro' theſe, *a Variety of Hindrances* in any Attempts of exemplary Piety, and in the Proſecution of a remarkably ſtrict and edifying Courſe, *will preſent themſelves* daily in your Path. And wherein

you

you may, by a few resolute Efforts, baffle *some of the former Sort* of Enemies; *these* will be perpetually *renewing their Onsets*, and a vigorous Struggle must be continually maintained with them. Give me Leave now therefore, to be *particular* in my *Cautions* against *some of the chief of them*. And here I would insist upon *the Difficulties*, which will arise from *Indolence*, and the *Love of Pleasure*, from *vain Company*, and from *worldly Cares*. Each of these may prove *insnaring to any*, and especially *to young Persons*, to whom I would now have some particular Regard.

§. 2. I INTREAT you therefore, in the first Place, that you would *guard* against *a sluggish and indolent Temper*. The *Love of Ease* insinuates itself into the Heart, under a Variety of *plausible Pretences*, which are often *allowed to pass*, when *Temptations of a grosser Nature* would *not be admitted*. The *misspending a little Time* seems to wise and good Men *but a small Matter*; yet this sometimes *runs them* into *great Inconveniences*. It often leads them to *break in upon the Seasons* regularly *allotted to Devotion*, and to *defer Business*, which might *immediately be done*, but being *put off* from Day to Day *is not done at all*; and thereby *the Services of Life* are at least *diminished*, and the *Rewards of Eternity* diminished *proportionably*: Not to insist upon it, that very frequently *this lays the Soul open* to farther *Temptations*, by which *it falls*, in Consequence of being *found unemployed*. Be therefore *suspicious* of the *first Approaches* of this Kind. Remember, that *the Soul* of Man is *an active Being*, and that it must *find its Pleasure* in Activity. *Gird up* therefore *the Loins of your Mind* (a). Endeavour to *keep yourself* always *well employed*. Be *exact*, if I may with humble Reverence use the Expression, *in your Appointments with GOD*. Meet him *early in the Morning*; and say not with *the Sluggard*, when the proper *Hour of Rising* is come, *A little more Sleep, a little more Slumber* (b). That *Time*, which Prudence shall advise you, *give to Conversation*, and to *other Recreations*. But when *that* is *elapsed*, and no unforeseen and important Engagement prevents, *rise and be gone*. Quit *the Company* of your dearest Friends, and *retire to your proper Business*, whether

(a) 1 Pet. i. 13. (b) Prov. vi. 10.

ther it be *in the Field, the Shop*, or *the Closet*. For *acting contrary* to the *secret Dictates* of your Mind, to *what it is* just at the present Moment *best to do*, t it be but in the Manner of *spending Half an Hour*, so Degree of *Guilt* is *contracted*, and *a Habit* is *chris* which may draw after it *much worse Consequences*. C sider therefore, *what Duties* are to be *dispatched*, and *what Seasons*. Form *your Plan* as *prudently* as you c and *pursue it resolutely*; unless any *unexpected Incid* arises, which leads you to conclude that *Duty calls* another Way. *Allowances* for such *unthought of Int ruptions* must be *made*; but if in Consequence of th you are obliged to *omit any Thing of Importance* wh you purposed *to have done To Day, do it* if possible *Morrow:* And do not *cut yourself out new Work*, till *former Plan* be *dispatched*; unless you really *judge it*, merely *more amusing*, but *more important*. And alw remember, that *a Servant of Christ* should see to that he *determine* on these Occasions, *as in his Mast Presence*.

§. 3. GUARD also against *an excessive Love of sen tive and animal Pleasure*, as that which will be *a gre Hindrance* to you *in that Religious Course*, which I ha now been urging. You cannot but know, that *Chr has told us*, that *a Man must deny himself, and take his Cross daily*, if he desire to *become his Disciple* (c CHRIST, the Son of GOD, *the Former* and *the Heir all Things, pleased not himself* (d); but *submitted to Wa* to *Difficulties*, and *Hardships*, in the *Way of Duty*, some of them *of the extreamest Kind* and *Degree*, the Glory of GOD and the Salvation of Men. *In this W* we are to *follow him*; and as we know not *how soon* may be *called*, even to *resist unto Blood, striving agai Sin* (e), it is certainly *best to accustom ourselves* to th *Discipline*, which we may possibly *be called out to exe cise*, even in such *rigorous Heights*. A *soft* and *de cate Life* will give *Force* to *Temptations*, which mig *easily be subdued* by one, who has habituated himself *endure Hardship as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ* (f) It also *produces* an *Attachment to this World*, and

Ure

(c) Luke ix. 23. (d) Rom. xv. 3. (e) Heb. xii. 4.
(f) 2 Tim. ii. 3.

willingneſs *to leave it*; which *ill becomes thoſe* who *Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth*, and who expect ſoon to be called away to *that better Country* which *profeſs to ſeek* (g). Add to this, that what the rld calls *a Life of Pleaſure*, is neceſſarily *a Life of ence* too, and may perhaps *lead you*, as it has done ny others, and eſpecially many who have been ſetting in the World, *beyond the Limits* which Providence aſſigned; and ſo after *a little Courſe of Indulgence* produce *proportionable Want*. And while *in other ſes* it is true, that *Pity ſhould be ſhewn to the Poor*, this *Poverty* that is *juſtly contemptible*, becauſe it is the eſt of *a Man's own Folly*; and when *your Want* thus es upon *you as an armed Man* (h), you will not only yourſelf *diſarmed of a Capacity* for performing *thoſe rks of Charity* which are *ſo ornamental* to a *Chriſtian* feſſion, but probably will be *under ſtrong Temptations* ſome *low Artifice* or *mean Compliance*, quite beneath *Chriſtian Character*, and that of *an upright Man*. ny who once *made a high Profeſſion*, after a Series of *ſorry* and *ſcandalous Shifts*, have fallen into *the In-* of *Bankrupts*, and of the *worſt Kind of Bankrupts*; I *ſuch*, as have *laviſhed away on themſelves* what was ed *the Property of others*, and ſo have *injured*, and haps *ruined*, *the induſtrious*, to feed *a fooliſh*, *luxurious*, *oſtentatious Humour*, which *while indulged* was *the* ne *of their own Families*, and when it can be *indulged* nger is *their Torment*. This will be *a terrible Re-* ch *to Religion:* Such *a Reproach* to it, that *a good* would rather chuſe *to live on Bread and Water*, indeed *to die for Want of them*, than to occaſion it.

4. GUARD therefore, I beſeech you, againſt *any* g *which might tend that Way*, eſpecially by *Dili-* e *in Buſineſs*, and by *Prudence* and *Frugality in Ex-* e; which, by the Divine Bleſſing, may have *a very* y *Influence* to make *your Affairs proſperous*, your lth *vigorous*, and your *Mind eaſy*. But this *cannot* ttained, without keeping *a reſolute Watch over your-* and ſtrenuouſly *refuſing to comply* with *many Propo-* which *Indolence* or *Senſuality* will offer *in very plau-* Forms, and for which it will plead, *that it aſks but*

(g) Heb. xi. 13,---16. (h) Prov. vi. 11.

very little. Take heed, lest in this Respect *you* i*those fond Parents*, who by *indulging their Ch* in every *little Thing* they have a Mind to, *enc* *them* by insensible Degrees *to grow* still *more increa* and *imperious* in their Demands; as if they chose *ruined with them*, rather than *to check them* in seems *a Trifle.* Remember, and consider *that exc* *Remark*, sealed *by the Ruin* of so many Thousands: " that despiseth *small Things*, shall fall by little and li

§. 5. In this View, give me Leave also seriously an derly *to caution you*, my dear Reader, against *the Sna* *vain Company.* I speak not, as before, *of that Co* which is *openly licentious* and *profane.* I hope, there is thing now *in your Temper* and *Views*, which would e you to *turn away from such* with *Detestation* and *H* But I beseech you to consider, that *those Companion* be *very dangerous*, who might *at first* give you *but little Alarm:* I mean *those*, who tho' *not the de* *Enemies of Religion*, and *professed Followers of Vic* *Disorder*, yet nevertheless *have no practical Sens* *vine Things* on their Hearts, so far as can be judge *their Conversation* and *Behaviour.* You must of *Necessity* be with *such Persons*; and *Christianity* not allows, but *requires*, that you should, *on all exp* *Occasions* of Intercourse with them, *treat them wit* *vility* and *Respect:* But *chuse not such* for your *most int* *Friends*, and do not contrive *to spend most of your L* *Moments* among them. For *such Converse* has a se Tendency to *alienate the Soul from GOD*, and to *r* *it unfit* for all *Spiritual Communion* with him. To vince you of this, do but *reflect on your own Experi* when you have been *for many Hours together* among *sons of such a Character.* Do you not find yourself *indisposed for Devotional Exercises?* Do you not *your Heart*, by insensible Degrees, *more and more in* to a *Conformity to this World*, and to look with a *Disrelish* on *those Objects* and *Employments*, to w Reason directs as *the noblest* and *the best?* Obser *Symptoms*, and guard against *the Snare* in Time: for this Purpose, endeavour to *form Friendships*, fou *in Piety*, and supported by it. *Be a Companion of*

ſtar GOD, *and of them that keep his Precepts* (i). well know, that in the Sight of GOD *they are the llent of the Earth*; let them therefore *be all your ght* (k). And that the peculiar *Benefit of their Friend-* may not be *loſt*, endeavour to *make the beſt* of the *s* you ſpend with them. The *wiſeſt of Men* has ob-, that when *Counſel in the Heart of a Man is like Waters*, that is, when it lies low and concealed, *a n of Underſtanding will draw it out* (l). Endeavour *fore on ſuch Occaſions*, ſo far as you can do it with ncy and Convenience, to *give the Converſation a ious Turn*. And when *ſerious* and *uſeful Subjects arted* in your Preſence, *lay hold of them*, and *culti- them*; and for that Purpoſe, *let the Word of Chriſt ll richly in you* (m), and be continually made *the of your Counſel* (n).

6. IF it be ſo, it will *ſecure you*, not only from *the* of *Idleneſs* and *Luxury*, but from *the Contagion* of *bad Example*. And it will alſo engage you to *guard* ſt *thoſe exceſſive Hurries of worldly Buſineſs*, which *ll fill up all your Time* and *Thoughts*, and thereby *the good Word* of GOD, *and render it* in a great ſure, if not quite, *unfruitful* (o). *Young People* are ally *of an enterprizing Diſpoſition*: Having experi- *comparatively little* of the *Fatigue of Buſineſs*, and *e Diſappointments* and *Incumbrances of Life*, they *ſwallow them up*, and *annihilate them* in their Ima- ion, and *fancy* that *their Spirit*, their *Application Addreſs*, will be *able to encounter* and *ſurmount* every *cle* or *Hindrance*. But *the Event* proves it *other-*. Let me intreat you therefore, to be *cautious*, how *plunge yourſelf* into *a greater Variety of Buſineſs* than *are capable of managing* as you ought, that is, *in dence* with the Care of your Souls, and the Service OD; which certainly *ought not* on any Pretence *to glected*. It is true indeed, that *a prudent Regard r worldly Intereſt* would *require ſuch a Caution*; as *obvious* to every careful Obſerver, that *Multitudes ndone*, by *graſping at more* than they can *conveni- manage*. Hence it has frequently been ſeen, that

) Pſal. cxix. 63. (k) Pſal. xvi. 3. (l) Prov. xx. 5.
) Col. iii. 16. (n) Pſal. cxix. 24. (o) Mat. xiii. 22.

while they have ſeemed *reſolved to be rich*, they h
pierced themſelves thro' with many Sorrows (p), have r
ed their own Families, and drawn down *many other*
Deſolation with them. Whereas, could they have b
contented with *moderate Employments* and *moderate Ga*
they might have *proſpered in their Buſineſs*, and m
by ſure Degrees, under a Divine Bleſſing, *have adva*
to great and *honourable Increaſe*. But if there were
Danger at all to be apprehended *on this Head*, if
were *as certain* of *becoming rich* and *great*, as you ar
perplexing and *fatiguing yourſelf* in the Attempt, c
ſider, I beſeech you, *how precarious theſe Enjoyments*
Conſider, how often *a plentiful Table becomes a Snare*,
that which ſhould have been for a Man's Welfare, becom
Trap (q). Forget not *that ſhort Leſſon*, which is ſo co
prehenſive of the higheſt Wiſdom; *One Thing is n*
ful (r). Be daily thinking, while *the gay* and *great Th*
of Life are *glittering before your Eyes*, how ſoon *De*
will come, and *impoveriſh you at once*; how ſoon it
ſtrip you of all Poſſeſſions, but *thoſe* which *a naked Soul*
carry along with it into *Eternity*, when it *drops the B*
in the Grave. ETERNITY! ETERNITY! ETERNIT
Carry *the View of it* about with you, if it be poſſi
thro' every Hour of *waking Life*; and be fully perſuad
that you have *no Buſineſs*, *no Intereſt in Life*, that is
conſiſtent with it: For whatſoever would be *injurious*
this View, is *not your Buſineſs*, is *not your Intereſt*.
ſee indeed, that the *Generality* of Men act, as if t
thought *the great Thing* which GOD required of th
in order to ſecure his Favour, was *to get as much of*
World as poſſible; at leaſt, *as much as they can* with
any groſs Immorality, and without riſquing the l
of all, for making a little Addition. And as if it w
to *abet this Deſign*, they tell others, and perhaps
themſelves, They only *ſeek Opportunities* of *greater*
fulneſs. But in effect, if they mean any Thing
by this, than *a Capacity of Uſefulneſs*, which,
they have it, *they will not exert*, they generally *dec*
themſelves; and one Way, or another, it is *a vain*
tence. In moſt Inſtances, Men *ſeek the World*, ei
that they may *hoard up Riches*, for the mean and ſo
da

(p) 1 Tim. vi. 10. (q) Pſal. lxix. 22. (r) Luke x. 42

lous Satisfaction of *looking upon them* while they are ing, and of *thinking*, that *when they are dead* it will said *of them*, that they have left *so many Hundreds Thousands of Pounds* behind them; very probably, *insnare their Children*, or *other Heirs*, (for the Vanity not *peculiar to those*, who have *Children of their own*:) else, that they may *lavish away their Riches* on ir Lusts, and *drown themselves* in a *Gulf of Sensuality*, which, if *Reason* be not lost, *Religion* is soon swal- wed up, and with it *all the noblest Pleasures* which can ter into the Heart of Man. In this View, the Gene- ity of *rich People* appear to me *Objects of much greater mpassion* than *the Poor*: Especially as when *both live* hich is frequently the Case,) *without any Fear of GOD* fore their Eyes, *the Rich* abuse *the greater Variety* and *undance* of his Favours, and therefore will probably d, in that *World of future Ruin* which awaits impeni- nt Sinners, *a more exquisite Sense* of their Misery.

§. 7. And let me observe to you, my dear Reader, you should think yourself *secure* from any *such Dan- r*, that we have great Reason to apprehend, there are ny now *in a very wretched State*, who once *thought rimsly* of Religion, when they were *first setting out*, in wer Circumstances of Life; but they have since *for- en GOD* for *Mammon*, and are now *priding themselves* those *golden Chains*, which in all Probability, before it long, will leave them to remain in *those of Darkness*. hen therefore *an Attachment to the World* may be fol- wed with *such fatal Consequences*, *let not thine Heart envy ners* (s), and do not, out of a Desire of gaining what y have, *be guilty of such Folly* as to expose yourself *this double Danger*, of *failing in the Attempt*, or of *undone by the Success of it*. Contract your Desires; deavour to be *easy* and *content with a little*: And if *ovidence* call you out to *act in a larger Sphere*, submit it *in Obedience to Providence*; but number it among *Trials of Life*, which it will require *a larger Propor- of Grace* to bear well. For be assured, that as *Af- rs* and *Interests* multiply, *Cares* and *Duties* will cer- ly *increase*, and probably *Disappointments* and *Sorrows increase* in an equal Proportion.

(s) Prov. xxiii. 17.

§. 8. On the whole, *Learn* by Divine Grace *to die to the present World*; to look upon it as *a low State of Being* which God *never intended* for the *final* and *compleat Happiness*, or the *supream Care* of any one of his Children: *A World*, where *something* is indeed *to be enjoyed* but chiefly *from himself*; where *a great Deal* is *to be born* with Patience and Resignation; and where *some important Duties* are to be *performed*, and *a Course of Discipline* to be *passed thro'*, by which you are be *formed for a better State*; to which as *a Christian* you are *near*, and to which God will *call you*, perhaps *on a Sudden*, but undoubtedly, if you hold on your Way, *in the fittest Time* and the *most convenient Manner*. Refer therefore all this *to him*. Let your *Hopes* and *Fears*, your *Expectations* and *Desires*, with Regard to *this World*, be kept *as low as possible*; and all your *Thoughts* be *united*, as much as may be, *in this one Centre*, What it is, that God would in present Circumstances, *have you to be*; and what is *the Method of Conduct*, by which you may most effectually *please* and *glorify him?*

The young Convert's Prayer *for Divine Protection against the Danger of these Snares.*

"BLESSED GOD! In the Midst of Ten Thousand *Snares* and *Dangers*, which surround me "*from without* and *from within*, permit me to look "*up unto Thee* with my humble Intreaty, that Thou "wouldst *deliver me from them that rise up against* "*me* (t), and that *Thine Eyes may be upon me for* "*Good* (u)! When *Sloth* and *Indolence* are ready to seize "me, *awaken me* from that *idle Dream*, with lively "and affectionate Views of *that Invisible and Eternal* "*World*, to which I am tending! *Remind me* of what "*infinite Importance* it is, that I *diligently improve* those "*transient Moments*, which Thou hast allotted to me "as *the Time of my Preparation* for it!

"When *Sinners entice me*, may I *not consent* (x)! May "*holy Converse with* GOD give me *a Distrelish for the* "*Converse* of those, who are *Strangers to Thee*, and "who would *separate my Soul* from Thee! May I be "Com-

(t) Psal. lix. 1. (u) Jer. xxiv. 6. (x) Prov. i. 10.

" *Companion of them that fear Thee, and of them that* " *keep Thy Precepts* (y)! And *walking with* such *wise* " *and holy Men*, may I find I am *daily advancing* in " *Wisdom* and *Holiness* (z)! *Quicken me*, Oh Lord, by " their Means, that *by me* Thou mayst also *quicken* " *others!* Make me *the happy Instrument* of *inkindling* " and *animating the Flame* of *Divine Love* in their " Breasts; and may it *catch* from Heart to Heart, and " *grow* every Moment in its Progress!

" Guard me, Oh Lord, from *the Love* of *sensual* " *Pleasure!* May I seriously remember, that *to be carnally* " *minded is Death* (a)! May it please Thee therefore, " to *purify* and *refine my Soul* by the Influences of *Thine* " *Holy Spirit*, that I may always *shun unlawful Gra-* " *tifications*, more solicitously than *others pursue them*; " and that *those Indulgences of animal Nature*, which " Thou hast *allowed*, and which the Constitution of " Things renders *necessary*, may be *soberly* and *mode-* " *rately used!* May I still remember *the superior Dig-* " *nity* of my *Spiritual* and *Intelligent Nature*, and may " *the Pleasures* of the *Man* and the *Christian* be sought " as *my noblest Happiness!* May *my Soul rise* on the " Wings of *holy Contemplation*, to the *Regions of Invi-* " *sible Glory*; and may I be endeavouring to *form myself*, " under the Influences of Divine Grace, *for the Enter-* " *tainments* of those *Angelick Spirits*, that [illegible] Thy " Presence *in a happy Incapacity* of those *gross Delights*, " by which *Spirits dwelling in Flesh* are so often *in-* " *snared*, and in which they so often *lose the Memory* " of their *high Original*, and of those *noble Hopes* " which alone are proportionable to it!

" Give me, Oh Lord, to *know the Station* in which " Thou hast fixed me, and steadily to *pursue the Duties* " of it! But *deliver me* from those *excessive Cares of* " *this World*, which would *so engross my Time* and *my* " *Thoughts*, that *the one Thing needful* should be *for-* " *gotten!* May *my Desires* after *worldly Possessions* be " *moderated*, by considering *their uncertain* and *unsatis-* " *fying Nature*; and while *others* are *laying up Treasures* " *on Earth*, may I be *rich towards GOD* (b)! May I " *never*

(y) Psal. cxix. 63.
(a) Rom. viii. 6.
(z) Prov. xiii. 20.
(b) Luke xii. 21.

" *never be too busy* to attend to *those great Affair*
" which lie between Thee and my Soul; *never be*
" *engrossed* with the *Concerns of Time*, as to *neglect t*
" *Interests of Eternity!* May I *pass thro' Earth* with m
" Heart and Hopes *set upon Heaven*, and *feel the dra*
" *ing Influence* stronger and stronger, as I *approach*
" nearer and nearer to it; till *the happy Moment* co
" when *every Earthly Object* shall *disappear* from
" View, and *the shining Glories of the Heavenly Wo*
" shall fill *my increased* and *strengthened Sight*, whic
" shall then *be cheared with that* which would no
" *overwhelm me!* Amen."

CHAP. XXII.

The Caſe of Spiritual Decay and Languor in Religion.

Declenſions in Religion, and Relapſes into Sin, with their ſorrowful Conſequences, are in the general too probable. §. 1. *The Caſe of Declenſion and Languor in Religion deſcribed, Negatively*; §. 2. *and Poſitively*; §. 3. *as diſcovering itſelf,* (1.) *By a Failure in the Duties of the Cloſet.* §. 4. (2.) *By a Neglect of Social Worſhip.* §. 5. (3.) *By Want of Love to our Fellow-Chriſtians.* §. 6. (4.) *By an undue Attachment to ſenſual Pleaſures, or ſecular Cares.* §. 7. (5.) *By Prejudices againſt ſome important Principles in Religion:* §. 8. *A Symptom peculiarly ſad and dangerous.* §. 9, 10. *Directions for Recovery,* §. 11, *immediately to be purſued.* §. 12. *A Prayer for one under Spiritual Decays.*

§. 1. IF I am ſo happy as to prevail upon you in the *Exhortations* and *Cautions* I have given, you will probably *go on* with *Pleaſure* and *Comfort* in Religion; and *your Path* will generally be *like the Morning Light, which ſhineth more and more until the perfect Day* (a). Yet I dare not flatter myſelf with an Expectation of *ſuch Succeſs*, as ſhall carry you above *thoſe Varieties* in *Temper, Conduct*, and *State*, which have been more or leſs *the Complaint* of the *beſt of Men*. Much do I fear, that, how warmly ſoever your Heart may *now* be impreſſed with the Repreſentation I have been making, tho' the great *Objects of your Faith and Hope* continue *unchangeable*, your *Temper towards them* will be *changed*. Much do I fear, that you will feel your

(a) Prov. iv. 18.

your Mind *languish* and *tire* in the good Ways of GOD; nay, that you may be prevailed upon to *take some Steps out of them*, and may thus *fall a Prey* to some of *those Temptations*, which you now look upon with a holy Scorn. The probable *Consequence of this* will be, that GOD will *hide his Face* from you; that he will stretch forth *his afflicting Hand* against you; and that you will still *see your sorrowful Moments*, how chearfully soever you may now be *rejoicing in the Lord, and joying in the GOD of your Salvation* (b). I hope therefore, it may be of some Service, if this *too probable Event* should happen, to consider *these Cases* a little more particularly: And I heartily pray, that GOD would make what I shall say concerning them, the Means of restoring, comforting, and strengthening your Soul.

§. 2. We will *first* consider the Case of *Spiritual Declensions*, and *Languor in Religion*. And here I desire, that, before I proceed any farther, you would observe, that I do not comprehend under this Head *every Abatement of that Fervour*, which *a young Convert* may find, when he *first* becomes *experimentally acquainted* with Divine Things. Our Natures are so framed, that *the Novelty of Objects* strikes them in something of a peculiar Manner: Not to urge, how much more easily *our Passions* are impressed *in the earlier Years of Life* than when we are *more advanced* in the Journey of it. This, perhaps, is not sufficiently considered. *Too great a Stress* is commonly laid on *the Flow of Affections*, and for want of this *a Christian* who is ripened in Grace, and greatly advanced in his Preparation for Glory, may sometimes be ready to *lament imaginary* rather than *real Decays*, and to say, without any just Foundation, *O that it were with me as in Months past* (c)! But you can hardly be too frequently told, that *Religion* consists chiefly, in the Resolution of the Will for GOD, and in a constant Care to avoid whatever we are persuaded He would disapprove, to dispatch the Work He has assigned us in Life, and to promote His Glory in the Happiness of Mankind. To *this* we are chiefly to attend, looking in all to the *Simplicity* and *Purity* of the *Motives* from which we act, which we know are chiefly regarded

(b) Hab. iii. 18. (c) Job xxix. 2.

regarded by that *GOD* who *searches the Heart*; humbling ourselves before him at the same Time under a Sense of our *many Imperfections*, and flying to the *Blood of Christ* and the *Grace of the Gospel*.

§. 3. HAVING given *this Precaution*, I will now a little more particularly *describe the Case*, which I call *the State of a Christian* who is *declining in Religion*; so far as it does not fall in with those, which I shall consider in the *following Chapters*. And I must observe, that it chiefly consists in *a Forgetfulness of Divine Objects*, and *a Remissness in those various Duties*, to which we stand engaged by *that solemn Surrender* which we have made of ourselves to the Service of GOD. There will be *a Variety of Symptoms*, according to the *different Circumstances* and *Relations* in which *the Christian* is placed; but *some* will be *of a more universal Kind*. It will be peculiarly proper to *touch on these*; and so much the rather, as *these Declensions* are *often unobserved*, like *the grey Hairs* which were *upon Ephraim*, when *he knew it not* (d).

§. 4. SHOULD you, my good Reader, *fall into this State*, it will probably first *discover itself*, by *a Failure in the Duties of the Closet*. Not that I suppose, *they will at first*, or certainly conclude, that they will *at all*, be *wholly omitted*: But they will be *run over* in *a cold and formal* Manner. *Sloth*, or some of those *other Snares* which I cautioned you against in the *former Chapter*, will so far prevail upon you, that tho' perhaps you know and recollect, that *the proper Season of Retirement* is come, you will sometimes *indulge yourself upon your Bed* in the *Morning*, sometimes *in Conversation* or *Business* in the *Evening*, so as not to have *convenient Time* for it. Or perhaps, when you *come into your Closet* at that Season, some *favourite Book* you are desirous to read, some *Correspondence* that you chuse to carry on, or some *other Amusement*, will present itself, and plead to be *dispatched first*. This will probably *take up more Time* than you imagined; and then, *Secret Prayer* will be *hurried over*, and perhaps *reading the Scripture* quite *neglected*. You will plead perhaps, that *it is but for once*: But the *same Allowance* will be made *a second*, and

(d) Hos. vii. 9.

and *a third Time*; and it will grow *more easy* and *fa-liar* to you *each Time*, than it was *the last*. And th *GOD* will be *mocked*, and *your own Soul* will be *frauded of its spiritual Meals*, if I may be allowed Expression; *the Word of GOD* will be *slighted*, *Self-Examination* quite *disused*; and *secret Prayer* it will grow *a Burthen*, rather than *a Delight*, and beco *a mere Ceremony*, rather than *a devout Homage* fit the Acceptance of *our Father who is Heaven*.

§. 5. If immediate and resolute Measures be taken for your Recovery from *these Declensions*, th will *spread farther*, and reach *the Acts of Social Wor* You will *feel the Effect* in your *Families*, and in P *lick Ordinances*. And if you *do not feel it*, the Sy *toms* will be *so much the worse*. *Wandering Thou* will as it were *eat out the very Heart* of these Du It is not, I believe, *the Privilege* of the *most emi Christians*, to be *entirely free* from them: But probab in these Circumstances, you will find *but few Inter* of *strict Attention*, or of *any Thing* which wears Appearance of *inward Devotion*. And when *these bra less Duties* are concluded, there will scarce be *a Ref tion* made, how little *GOD* hath been *enjoyed in th* how little he hath been *honoured by them*. Perhaps Sacrament of *the Lord's-Supper*, being so admira adapted to fix the Attention of the Soul, and to exc its warmest Exercise of holy Affections, may be *the Ordinance* in which *these Declensions* will be *felt*. A yet, who can say, that *the Sacred Table* is *a privile Place?* Having been unnecessarily *straitned in your P parations*, you will attend with *less Fixedness* and *largement of Heart* than usual. And perhaps *a Dis tisfaction in the Review*, when there has been a rema able *Alienation* or *Insensibility of Mind*, may occas a Disposition to *forsake your Place* and *your Duty* th And when *your Spiritual Enemies* have once *gained Point* upon you, it is probable *you will fall* by *swif Degrees* than ever, and *your Resistance* to their Attem will grow *weaker and weaker*.

§. 6. When *your Love* to *GOD our Father*, and *the Lord Jesus Christ* fails, *your Fervour* of *Christ Affection* to *your Brethren in Christ* will proportiona *decli*

ardour, and your Concern for Usefulness in Life abate; especially, where any Thing is to be done for *Spiritual Edification*. You will find *one Excuse* or *another*, for *that Neglect of Religious Discourse*, perhaps not only *among Neighbours* and *Christian Friends*, when very convenient Opportunities offer; but even *with Regard to those*, who are *Members of your own Families*, and to *those*, *who*, if you are fixed in the superior Relations of *Life*, *are committed to your Care*.

§. 7. WITH this Remissness, *an Attachment*, either *to sensual Pleasure*, or *to worldly Business*, will increase. *For the Soul* must have something *to employ it*, and something *to delight itself in*: And as it turns to one or the other of these, *Temptations* of one Sort or another *will present themselves*. In *some Instances*, perhaps *the strict Bounds of Temperance*, and *the regular Appointments of Life* may be *broken in upon*, thro' *a Fondness for Company*, and *the Entertainments* which often attend it. In *other Instances*, the *Interests of Life* appearing *greater* than they did before, and taking up more of the Mind, *contrary Interests of other Persons* may throw you into *Disquietude*, or plunge you in *Debate* and *Contention*; by which it is extreamly difficult to preserve, either *the Serenity*, or *the Innocence* of the Soul. And perhaps, if *Ministers* and other *Christian Friends* observe this, and *endeavour* in a plain and faithful Way *to reduce you* from your Wandring, *a false Delicacy of Mind*, often contracted in such a State as this, will *render these Attempts* extreamly disagreeable. *The Ulcer of the Soul* (if I may be allowed the Expression,) *will not bear being touched*, when it most needs it; and one of the most generous and self-denying Instances of *Christian Friendship* shall be turned into an Occasion of *Coldness* and *Distaste*, yea perhaps of *Enmity*.

§. 8. AND possibly, to sum up all, this disordered State of Mind may lead you into *some Prejudices against* those *very Principles*, which might be *most effectual for your Recovery*: And your *great Enemy* may succeed so far in his Attempts against you, as to *persuade you*, that you have *lost nothing in Religion*, when you have *almost lost all*. He may very probably *lead you to conclude*, that *your former Devotional Frames* were *mere Fits of*

Enthusiasm; and that *the holy Regularity of your* before GOD was *an unnecessary Strictness* and *Sev* *losity*. Nay, you may think it *a great Improvement* *Understanding*, that you have *learnt from some new* *ters*, that if a Man *treat his Fellow-Creatures* with manity and Good Nature, *judging* and *reviling only* who would *disturb others* by the *Narrowness of* *Notions*, (for these are *generally exempted* from Objects of *the most universal* and *disinterested Benev* so often boasted of,) *he must* necessarily *be in a very* *State*, tho' he pretend not to *converse much with G* provided that he *think respectfully of him*, and do *provoke him* by any *gross Immoralities*.

§. 9. I MENTION *this* in the *last Stage of Rel* *Declensions*, because I apprehend *that* to be *its* *Place*; and I fear, it will be found by Experienc *stand upon the very Confines* of that *gross Apostacy* *deliberate and presumptuous Sin*, which will claim Consideration under the *next Head*: And because *that Symptom*, which most effectually tends to *pr* *the Success*, and even *the Use*, of any *proper Rem* in Consequence of *a fond* and *fatal Apprehension*, *they are needless*. It is, if I may borrow *the Si* like *those Fits of Lethargick Drowsiness*, which *precede Apoplexies* and *Death*.

§. 10. IT is by no means my Design at this Ti reckon up, much less to consider at large, *those d* *rous Principles*, which are now ready to *possess the* and to *lay the Foundation* of a *false* and *treacherous* Indeed they are in different Instances *various*, and times run into *opposite Extreams*. But if GOD a you to *read your Bible with Attention*, and give *feel the Spirit* with which it is written, almost *Page* will *flash in Conviction* upon the Mind, and *a Light* to scatter and disperse *these Shades of Dark*

§. 11. WHAT I chiefly intend in this Address, *engage you*, if possible, as soon as you perceive *the* *Symptoms* of *these Declensions*, to *be upon your G* and to *endeavour* as speedily as possible *to recover* from them. And I would remind you, that *the* *dy must begin*, where *the first Cause of Complaint* vailed, I mean, *in the Closet*. Take some Ti

ulation, and ask *your own Conſcience* ſeriouſly, *How matters ſtand* between *the Bleſſed GOD*, and *your Soul?* whether they are *as they once were*, and as *you could wiſh them to be* if you ſaw *your Life juſt drawing to a period*, and were to *paſs immediately* into the *Eternal World?* One ſerious Thought of *Eternity* ſhames a Thouſand *vain Excuſes*, with which, in the Forgetfulneſs of Heart we are ready to delude our own Souls. And when you *feel* that ſecret *Miſgiving of Heart*, which will naturally ariſe on this Occaſion, do not endeavour to *palliate the Matter*, and to find out *ſlight* and *artful* Answerings, for what you cannot forbear ſecretly condemning; but honeſtly *fall under the Conviction*, and be humbled for it. *Pour out your Heart* before GOD, and ſeek *the renewed Influences* of His *Spirit* and *Grace*. Return with more Exactneſs to *Secret Devotion*, and to *Self-Examination*. Read *the Scripture* with yet greater Attendence, and eſpecially *the more Devotional* and *Spiritual Parts* of it. Labour to *ground it in your Heart*, and to *feel*, what you have Reaſon to believe *the Sacred Writers felt* when they wrote, ſo far as Circumſtances may agree. *Open your Soul* with all Simplicity, *to every Truth* which the *Word of GOD* would teach you; and *guard againſt thoſe Things*, which you perceive to *alienate your Mind* from *Inward Religion*, tho' there be nothing *criminal* in the Things themſelves. *They may* perhaps in the general *be lawful*; to ſome poſſibly *they may be expedient*; but if they produce ſuch an Effect as is mentioned above, it is certain *they are not convenient* for you. In theſe Circumſtances, above all *ſeek the Converſe* of thoſe *Chriſtians*, whoſe *Progreſs in Religion* is moſt remarkable, and who *adorn their Profeſſion* in the moſt amiable Manner. Labour to obtain *their Temper* and *Sentiments*, and lay open *your Caſe* and *your Heart* to them, with *all the Freedom* which Prudence will permit. Employ yourſelf, at Seaſons of Leiſure, in *reading Practical* and *Devotional Books*, in which the Mind and Heart of *the Pious Author* is tranſfuſed into his Work, and in which you can (as it were) *taſte* the very *Spirit of Chriſtianity*. And to conclude, Take the *firſt Opportunity* that preſents, of making *an Approach to the Table of the Lord*, and ſpare neither Time,

nor Pains, in the *most serious Preparation* for it. T
renew your Covenant with GOD; *put your Soul* a
into the Hand of Christ, and endeavour to *view*
Wonders of *his dying Love*, in such a Manner as
rekindle the languishing Flame, and quicken you to
vigorous Resolutions than ever, *to live unto him who*
for you (e). And watch over your own Heart, that
good Impressions you then feel, *may continue*. Rest
till you have obtained *as confirmed a State in Relig*
as you ever knew. Rest not, till you have made *a gre*
Progress than before: For it is certain, *more is yet*
hind; and it is only *by a Zeal to go forward*, that
can be *secure* from the Danger of *going backward*,
of *revolting more and more*.

§. 12. I ONLY add, that it is *necessary* to take t
Precautions *as soon as possible*; or you will probably
a much swifter Progress than you are aware *in the d*
hill Road; and you may possibly *be left of GOD*, t
into some *gross* and *aggravated Sin*, so as to fill
Conscience with *an Agony* and *Horror*, which the
of *broken Bones* (f) can but imperfectly express.

A PRAYER *for one under Spiritual Decays.*

" ETERNAL and *Unchangeable* JEHOVAH!
" *Perfections* and *Glories* are, like Thy B
" *immutable*. JESUS. Thy Son is *the same Yesterday*
" *Day, and for ever* (g). The *Eternal World* to w
" I am hastning, is *always equally important*, and p
" upon the attentive Mind for *a more fixed* and *s*
" *Regard*, in Proportion to the Degree in whi
" comes *nearer and nearer*. But, alas, *my Views*,
" *my Affections*, and *my best Resolutions* are *contin*
" *varying*, like *this poor Body*, which goes thro'
" and *hourly Alterations* in its State and Circumst
" *Whence*, Oh Lord, *whence this sad Change*, w
" I now experience, *in the Frame* and *Temper*
" *Mind* towards Thee? *Whence this Alienation* o
" Soul from Thee? Why *can I not come to Thee*
" all the Endearments of filial Love, *as I once co*
" Why is *Thy Service* so *remissly attended*, if att

(e) 2 Cor. v. 15. (f) Psal. li. 8. (g) Heb. xiii.

at all? and why are *the Exercises of it*, which were once *my greatest Pleasure*, become *a Burthen* to me? *Where*, Oh GOD, *is the Blessedness I* once *spake of* (h), when *my Joy in Thee* as my Heavenly Father was *so conspicuous*, that *Strangers* might have observed it; and when *my Heart* did *so overflow* with *Love* to Thee, and with *Zeal* for Thy Service, that it was Matter of *Self-Denial* to me, to *limit* and *restrain* the genuine *Expressions* of those *strong Emotions* of my Soul, even where Prudence and Duty required it?

"Alas, Lord, *whither am I fallen?* Thine *Eye sees me* still; but oh *how unlike* what it once saw me! *Cold* and *insensible* as I am, I must *blush* on the Reflection.——Thou *seest me in Secret* (i); and seest me, perhaps, often *amusing myself with Trifles* in those Seasons, which I used solemnly to devote to Thine immediate Service. Thou *seest me, coming into Thy Presence* as *by Constraint*; and when I am *before Thee*, so *straitened in my Spirit*, that I hardly know *what to say to Thee*, tho' Thou art *the GOD with whom I have to do*, and tho' the keeping up an humble and dutiful *Correspondence with Thee* is beyond all Comparison *the most important Business* of my Life. And even *when I am speaking to Thee*, with how much *Coldness* and *Formality* is it? It is perhaps *the Work of the Imagination*, the *Labour of the Lips*: But where are *those ardent Desires*, those *intense Breathings after* GOD, which I once felt? Where is that *pleasing Repose in Thee*, which I was once conscious of, as being *near my Divine Rest*, as being *happy in that Nearness*, and resolving that if possible I would *no more be removed* from it? But oh, *how far am I now removed?* When these *short Devotions*, if they may be called Devotions, *are over*, in what *long Intervals* do I forget Thee, and appear *so little animated* with Thy Love, *so little devoted* to Thy Service, that *a Stranger might converse with me* a considerable Time, *without knowing* that I had ever *formed any Acquaintance* with Thee, *without discovering* that I had so much as *known* or *heard any Thing of* GOD?——Thou *calledst me to Thine House*,

(h) Gal. iv. 15. (i) Mat. vi. 6.

" Oh Lord, *on Thine own Day*; but *how heartleſs a*
" *my Services* there? I *offer Thee* no more than *a Ca*
" *caſe. My Thoughts* and *Affections* are *engroſſed wi*
" *other Objects*, while *I draw near Thee with*
" *Mouth, and honour Thee with my Lips* (k).——Th
" *calleſt me to Thy Table*; but *my Heart* is *ſo froze*
" that it *hardly melts* even *at the Foot of the Croſ*
" hardly *feels any Efficacy* in the *Blood of Jeſus*. O
" *wretched Creature that I am!* Unworthy of *bei*
" *called Thine!* Unworthy of *a Place among Thy Ch*
" *dren*, or of the *meaneſt Situation in Thy Family*;
" ther *worthy* to be *caſt out*, to be *forſaken*, yea, to
" *utterly deſtroyed!*

" Is *this*, Lord, *the Service*, which *I once promiſe*
" and which *Thou haſt* ſo many Thouſand *Reaſons*
" *expect?* Are *theſe the Returns* I am making, for *T*
" *daily Providential Care*, for *the Sacrifice of Thy So*
" for *the Communications of Thy Spirit*, for *the Par*
" *of my numberleſs aggravated Sins*, for *the Hopes*, t
" *undeſerved* and ſo often *forfeited Hopes*, *of Eter*
" *Glory?* Lord, *I am aſhamed* to *ſtand*, or to *kn*
" before Thee. But *pity me*, I beſeech Thee, and *b*
" *me*: For I am *a pitiable Object* indeed! *My So*
" *cleaveth unto the Duſt*, and lays itſelf *as in the D*
" before *Thee*; but, Oh *quicken me according to T*
" *Word* (l)! Let me *triſle no longer*, for I am *upon*
" *Brink of a Precipice!* I am *thinking of my Wa*
" Oh give me Grace to *turn my Feet unto Thy Teſti*
" *nies*; to *make haſte, without any farther Delay*, t
" I may *keep Thy Commandments* (m)! *Search me*,
" Lord, *and try me* (n)! Go to *the firſt Root* of *t*
" *Diſtemper*, which ſpreads itſelf over my Soul;
" *recover me from it!* Repreſent *Sin* unto me, Oh Lo
" I beſeech Thee, that I may *ſee it with Abhorren*
" And repreſent *the Lord Jeſus Chriſt* to me, *in ſ*
" *a Light*, that I may *look upon him and mourn*
" that I may *look upon him and love!* May I *awa*
" *from this ſtupid Lethargy*, into which I am ſinkin
" and may *Chriſt give me* more abundant Degrees
" *Spiritual Life* and *Activity*, than I have ever yet
" ceiv

(k) Iſai. xxix. 13. (l) Pſal. cxix. 25. (m) Pſal. cxix. 59.
(n) Pſal. cxxxix. 23. (o) Zech. xii. 10.

" ceived! And may I be *so quickened* and *animated* by " Him, that I may *more than recover the Ground I* " *have lost*, and make *a more speedy and exemplary* " *Progress*, than *in my best Days* I have ever yet done! " *Send down upon me*, Oh Lord, in a more rich and " abundant Effusion, *Thy good Spirit!* May He *dwell* " *in me*, as *in a Temple* which He has *consecrated to* " *Himself* (p); and while *all the Service* is *directed* and " *governed by Him*, may *holy and acceptable Sacrifices* " be continually *offered* (q)! May *the Incense* be *con-* " *stant*, and may it be *fragrant!* May the *Sacred Fire* " *burn* and *blaze perpetually* (r); and may *none of its* " *Vessels* ever be *profaned*, by being employed to *an* " *unholy* or *forbidden Use!* Amen."

(p) 1 Cor. iii. 16. (q) Rom. xii. 1. (r) Lev. vi. 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

The sad Case of a Relapse into known and deliberate Sin, after solemn Acts of Dedication to GOD, and some Progress made in Religion.

Unthought of Relapses may happen, §. 1. *and bring the Soul into a miserable Case.* §. 2. *Yet the Case is not desperate.* §. 3. *The Backslider urged immediately to return:* (1.) *By deep Humiliation before GOD for so aggravated an Offence.* §. 4. (2.) *By renewed Regards to the Divine Mercy in Christ.* §. 5. (3.) *By an open Profession of Repentance, where the Crime hath given publick Offence.* §. 6. (4.) *Falls to be reviewed for future Caution.* §. 7. *The Chapter concludes,* §. 8. *with a Prayer for the Use of one who hath fallen into gross Sins, after Religious Resolutions and Engagements.*

§. 1. THE *Declensions* which I have described in *the foregoing Chapter,* must be acknowledged *worthy of deep Lamentation:* But *happy will you be,* my dear Reader, if you *never know,* by Experience, *a Circumstance yet more melancholy* than this. Perhaps, when you consider *the View of Things* which you *now have,* you imagine that *no Considerations* can ever *bribe you,* in any single Instance, *to act contrary* to the *present Dictates* or *Suggestions* of *your Conscience,* and of *the Spirit of GOD* as setting it on Work. No: You *think,* it would be *better for you to dye.* And you *think rightly.* But *Peter* thought, and said so too: *Tho' I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee* (a). And yet, after all, he *fell*

(a) Mat. xxvi. 35.

full: And therefore *be not high-minded, but fear* (b). It is *not impoſſible,* but you may *fall into that very Sin,* of which *you imagine* you are *leaſt in Danger,* or into *that* againſt which you have *moſt ſolemnly reſolved,* and of which you have already *moſt bitterly repented.* You may *relapſe into it* again and again. But Oh, *if you do,* nay, if you ſhould *deliberately* and *preſumptuouſly fall* but once, *how deep will it pierce* your Heart? *How dear will you pay* for *all the Pleaſure,* with which the Temptation has been baited? *How will this ſeparate* between God and you? *What a Deſolation,* what *a dreadful Deſolation,* will it *ſpread over your Soul?* It is *grievous to think of it.* Perhaps *in ſuch a State* you may *feel more Agony* and *Diſtreſs* in your own Conſcience, when you come ſeriouſly to reflect, *than you ever felt* when you were *firſt awakened* and *reclaimed*; becauſe *the Sin* will be attended with *ſome very high Aggravations,* beyond *thoſe of your unregenerate State.* I well knew *the Perſon,* that ſaid, *The Agonies of a Sinner in the firſt Pangs of his Repentance* were *not to be mentioned on the ſame Day* with *thoſe of the Backſlider in Heart,* when he comes to be *filled with his own Way* (c).

§. 2. INDEED it is enough to *wound one's Heart* to think, *how yours will be wounded:* How *all your Comforts,* all *your Evidences,* all *your Hopes* will *be clouded:* What *thick Darkneſs* will ſpread itſelf *on every Side,* ſo that *neither Sun,* nor *Moon,* nor *Stars,* will *appear in your Heaven.* Your *Spiritual Conſolations* will *be gone*; and *your Temporal Enjoyments* will alſo be rendered *taſteleſs* and *inſipid.* And if *Afflictions be ſent,* as they *probably may* in order to reclaim you, *a Conſciouſneſs of Guilt* will *ſharpen* and *invenom the Dart.* Then will *the Enemy of your Soul* with all his Art and Power *riſe up againſt you,* encouraged by your Fall, and labouring to trample you down in utter hopeleſs Ruin. He will *perſuade you,* that you are *already undone beyond Recovery.* He will *ſuggeſt,* that it *ſignifies nothing* to *attempt it any more*; for that *every Effort,* every *Amendment,* every *Act of Repentance,* will but *make your Caſe ſo much the worſe,* and *plunge you lower and lower* into Hell.

§. 3. THUS

(b) Rom. xi. 20. (c) Prov. xiv. 14.

§. 3. THUS will he *endeavour by Terrors* to *keep you from that ſure Remedy*, which yet remains. But *yield not* to him. *Your Caſe* will indeed be *ſad*; and if it be *now your Caſe*, it is *deplorably ſo*; and *to reſt in it* would be *ſtill much worſe*. Your Heart would be *hardned yet more and more*; and nothing could be *expected*, but *ſudden* and *aggravated Deſtruction*. Yet bleſſed be GOD, *it is not hopeleſs*. Your *Wounds are corrupted, becauſe of your Fooliſhneſs* (d); but *the Gangrene* is *not incurable*. *There is Balm in Gilead, there is a Phyſician there* (e). Do not therefore *render your Condition* indeed *hopeleſs*, by now *ſaying, There is no Hope* (f). Let me addreſs you, in the Language of GOD to *his backſliding People*, when they were ready to *apprehend that* to be *their Caſe*: *Only return unto me, ſaith the Lord* (g). Cry for *renewed Grace*; and in the Strength of it *labour to return*. Cry with *David*, under the like Guilt; *I have gone aſtray like a loſt Sheep, ſeek thy Servant; for I do not forget thy Commandments* (h); and *that Remembrance of them* is, I hope, *a Token for Good*. But if thou wilt *return at all*, do it *immediately*. Take not *one Step more* in that *fatal Path*, to which thou haſt turned aſide. Think not to add *one Sin more* to the Account, and *then to repent*; as if it would be *but the ſame Thing* on the whole. *The ſecond Error* may be *worſe than the firſt*; it may *make Way* for *another* and *another*, and draw on *a terrible Train of Conſequences* beyond all you can now imagine. *Make haſte* therefore, and *do not delay*. *Eſcape*, and fly, as *for thy Life* (i), before *the Dart ſtrike thro' thy Liver* (k). *Give not Sleep to thine Eyes, nor Slumber to thine Eye-lids* (l): Lie not down upon thy Bed *under unpardoned Guilt*, leſt *Evil overtake thee*, leſt *the Sword of Divine Juſtice* ſhould *ſmite thee*; and whilſt thou purpoſeſt to *return To Morrow*, thou ſhouldſt *this Night* go and *take Poſſeſſion of Hell*.

§. 4. RETURN *immediately*; and permit me to add, *return ſolemnly*. Some very pious and excellent *Divines* have *expreſſed themſelves* upon this Head, *in a Manner* which ſeems *liable to dangerous Abuſe*; when they *urge*

Men

(d) Pſal. xxxviii. 5. (e) Jer. viii. 22. (f) Jer. ii. 25.
(g) Jer. iii. 1, 13. (h) Pſal. cxix. 176. (i) Gen. xix. 17.
(k) Prov. vii. 23. (l) Prov. vi. 4.

Men after a Fall, *not to ſtay to ſurvey the Ground*, nor to conſider *how they came to be thrown down*, but *immediately to get up* and *renew the Race*. In *ſlighter Caſes*, the *Advice* is *good*: But when Conſcience has ſuffered *ſuch violent Outrage* by the Commiſſion of *known, wilful*, and *deliberate Sin*, (a Caſe, which one would hope, ſhould *but ſeldom happen* to thoſe who have once *ſincerely entered* on a religious Courſe,) I can by no means think, that either *Reaſon* or *Scripture* encourage ſuch a Method. Eſpecially would it be *improper*, if *the Action itſelf* has been *of ſo heinous a Nature*, that even *to have fallen into it on the moſt ſudden Surprize of Temptation* muſt greatly have *ſhamed*, and *terrified*, and *diſtreſſed the Soul*. Such an Affair is *dreadfully ſolemn*, and ſhould be *treated accordingly*. If *this* has been *the ſad Caſe with you*, my then unhappy Reader, I would *pity you*, and *mourn over you*; and would *beſeech you*, as you *tender your Peace, your Recovery, the Health* and *the very Life of your Soul*, that you *would not loiter away an Hour*. Retire *immediately* for ſerious Reflection. *Break thro' other Engagements* and *Employments*, unleſs they be *ſuch as you cannot* in Conſcience *delay* for a few Hours, which can *ſeldom happen* in the Circumſtance I now ſuppoſe. *This is the one Thing needful*. Set yourſelf to it therefore, *as in the Preſence of* GOD, and *bear at large* patiently and humbly *what Conſcience has to ſay*, tho' it chide and reproach ſeverely. Yea, earneſtly *pray*, that GOD would *ſpeak to you by Conſcience*, and make you *more thoroughly to know* and feel, *what an evil and bitter Thing it is, that you have* thus *forſaken him* (m). Think of *all the aggravating Circumſtances* attending your Offence; and eſpecially think of *thoſe*, which ariſe from *abuſed Mercy* and *Goodneſs*; which ariſe, not only from *your ſolemn Vows* and *Engagements* to GOD, but from *the Views* you have had *of a Redeemer's Love, ſealed* even *in Blood*. And *are theſe the Returns?* Was it *not enough*, that *Chriſt* ſhould have been *thus injured by his Enemies?* Muſt he be *wounded in the Houſe of his Friends* too (n)? Were you *delivered, to work ſuch Abominations as theſe* (o)? Did the Bleſſed JESUS *groan* and *die* for you, that you might *ſin with Boldneſs* and *Freedom*, that you might

(m) Jer. ii. 19. (n) Zech. xiii. 6. (o) Jer. vii. 10.

might *extract*, as it were, *the very Spirit and Essence* *Sin*, and *offend* GOD to a Height of *Ingratitude* a *Baseness*, which would *otherwise* have been in the N ture of Things *impossible?* Oh think, how justly G might *cast you out from his Presence!* How justly might *number you* among the *most signal Instances* of *Vengeance!* And think, how *your Heart would endu* *or your Hands be strong*, if he should *deal thus* w *you* (p)! Alas! All your *former Experiences* would *enba* *your Sense* of the *Ruin* and *Misery*, that must be felt *an Eternal Banishment* from the Divine Presence a Favour.

§. 5. INDULGE *such Reflections* as these. Stand *humbling Sight of your Sins* in such a View as this. T *more odious* and the *more painful* it appears, *the grea* *Prospect* there will be *of your Benefit* by attending to But the Matter is *not to rest here.* All *these Reflections* int nded, *not to grieve*, but *to cure*; and *to grieve* *more*, than may *promote the Cure.* You are indeed *look upon Sin:* But you are also, in such a Circumstan if ever, to *look upon Christ*; to *look upon him, whom* *have* now *pierced* deeper than before, and to *mourn* *him* with Sincerity and Tenderness (q). The GOD wh you have *injured* and *affronted*, whose *Laws* you h *broken*, and whose *Justice* you have, as it were, *challeng* by this foolish wretched *Apostacy*, is nevertheless *a most m* *ciful GOD* (r). You cannot be *so ready to return* to him, he is *to receive you.* Even *now* does he, as it were, *licit a Reconciliation*, by those *tender Impressions* wh he is making upon your Heart. But remember, *how will be reconciled.* It is *in the very same Way*, in wh you made *your first Approach* to him; *in the Name*, *for the Sake*, of *his dear Son.* Come therefore, *in* *humble Dependance* upon him. *Renew your Applicat* to JESUS, that *his Blood* may (as it were) be *sprink* *upon your Soul*, and your Soul may thereby be purifi and your Guilt removed. *This very Sin* of yours, wh the Blessed GOD foresaw, *increased the Weight* of y *Redeemer's Sufferings:* It was *concerned in shedding* *Blood.* Humbly go, and *place your Wounds*, as it w *under the Droppings* of that *precious Balm*, by wh al

(p) Ezek. xxii. 14. (q) Zech. xii. 10. (r) Deut. iv. 3

ere they can be healed. That *compaſſionate Saviour* will delight to *reſtore you*, when you *lie* as an humble ſuppliant *at his Feet*, and will graciouſly *take Part with* you in that *Peace* and *Pleaſure* which he gives. Through him *renew your Covenant* with GOD, *that broken Covenant*, the Breach of which *Divine Juſtice* might teach you to know *by terrible Things in Righteouſneſs* (s): But Mercy allows of *an Accommodation*. Let the Conſciouſneſs and Remembrance of *that Breach* engage you *to enter into Covenant anew*, under *a deeper Senſe* than ever *of your own Weakneſs*, and with *a more cordial Dependance on Divine Grace* for your Security, than you have ever yet entertained. I know, you will be *aſhamed to preſent yourſelf* among the Children of GOD *in his Sanctuary*, and eſpecially *at his Table*, under a Conſciouſneſs of ſo much Guilt: But *break thro' that Shame*, and Providence open you the Way. You *would be humbled* before your offended Father: But ſurely there is *no Place* where you are *more like to be humbled*, than when you ſee yourſelf *in his Houſe*; and *no Ordinance* adminiſtred there *can lay you lower*, than *that* in which *Chriſt is evidently ſet forth as crucified before your Eyes* (t). Mourners are *the only Perſons*, who have Buſineſs there. The *beſt of Men* come to *that Sacred Table* as Sinners: and *ſuch* make your Approach to it; yea, *as the greateſt of Sinners*; as one who *needs the Blood of Jeſus*, as much as any Creature upon Earth.

§. 6. AND let me remind you of one Thing more: Your *Fall* has been of ſuch a Nature as to *give any Scandal to others*, be not at all concerned to *ſave Appearances*, and to *moderate thoſe Mortifications* which *your Humiliation before them* would occaſion. The Grief and Pain of *that Mortification* is indeed *an excellent Medicine*, which *GOD* has in wiſe Goodneſs *appointed for you* in ſuch Circumſtances as theſe. In ſuch a Caſe, *confeſs your Fault* with the greateſt Frankneſs: *aggravate it* to the utmoſt: *Intreat Pardon*, and *Prayer*, of thoſe whom you have offended. *Then*, and *never* till *then*, will you be *in the Way to Peace*: Not by *palliating a Fault*, not by *making vain Excuſes*, not by *reflecting to the Manner* in which *others* may have *treated*

you;

(s) Pſal. lxv. 5. (t) Gal. iii. 1.

you; as if *the least Degree of Rigour* in a faithful *A* monition *were a Crime* equal to *some great Immora* that occasioned it. *This* can only proceed from *Madness* of *Pride* and *Self-Love*: It is *the Sensibili a Wound*, which is *hardened*, *swelled*, and *inflam* and it must be *reduced*, and *cooled*, and *suppled*, bef it can possibly be cured. To be *censured*, and *condem by Men*, will be *but a little Grievance*, to a Soul *roughly humbled* and *broken* under a Sense of having curred *the condemning Sentence of GOD*. Such a will *rather desire to glorify GOD*, by submitting to served Blame; and will *fear deceiving others* into a m favourable Opinion of him, than he inwardly kn himself to deserve. *These* are *the Sentiments* which G gives to *the sincere Penitent* in such a Case; and by means He *restores him* to *that Credit and Regard a others*, which he does not know how to seek; but wh nevertheless, *for the Sake* both *of his Comfort* and *fulness*, GOD *wills that he should have*; and which is, humanly speaking, *impossible for him* to recover other Way. But there is *something so honourable* in *frank Acknowledgment of a Fault*, and *deep Humilia for it*, that all who *see it*, must needs *approve it*. T *pity an Offender*, who is brought to *such a Disposi* and endeavour to *comfort him* with returning *Expres* not only *of their Love*, but *of their Esteem* too.

§. 7. EXCUSE *this Digression*, which may *suit Cases*; and which would *suit many more*, if *a re Discipline* were to be exercised *in Churches*: For on a Supposition, *the Lord's Supper* could not be approac *after visible and scandalous Falls*, without *solemn C fession of the Offence*, and *Declarations of Repent* On the other hand, there may be *Instances of sad A stacy*, where *the Crime*, tho' highly aggravated be GOD, *may not fall under Human Notice*. In this C remember, that *your Business is with Him*, to wh piercing Eye every Thing appears in its just Light: *fore Him* therefore *prostrate your Souls*, and seek *a fu Reconciliation with Him*, confirmed by *the Memorial his dying Son*. And when *this is done*, imagine not, becaufe you have received the Tokens of Pardon, *Guilt of your Apostacy* is to be *forgot at once*. Be

ll *in your Memory* for future Caution: *Lament it before* GOD, in the frequent Returns of *ſecret Devotion* eſpecially: nd *view* with Humiliation *the Scars* of *thoſe Wounds* hich your own Folly occaſioned, even when by Divine race they are thoroughly healed. For *GOD eſtabliſhes is Covenant*, not to remove the Senſe of every paſt Abomination, but *that thou mayeſt remember thy Ways, and e confounded, and never open thy Mouth any more becauſe f thy Shame*, even *when I am pacified towards thee for ll that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord* (u).

§. 8. And now, upon the whole, if you deſire to *attain ſuch a Temper*, and to *return by ſuch Steps as theſe*, hen immediately *fall down before* GOD, and *pour out ur Heart in His Preſence*, in Language like this.

A Prayer *for one who has fallen into groſs Sin, after Religious Reſolutions and Engagements.*

"O H *moſt Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord* GOD! When I "ſeriouſly reflect on *Thy ſpotleſs Purity*, and on "the ſtrict and impartial Methods of *Thy ſteady Adminiſtration*, together with *that Almighty Power of Thine*, "which is able to carry *every Thought of Thine Heart* in"to immediate and full *Execution*, I may juſtly *appear* "*before Thee* this Day *with Shame* and *Terror*, in Con"fuſion and Conſternation of Spirit: For *Thou*, Oh "Lord, *knoweſt my Fooliſhneſs, and my Sins are not hid* "*from Thee* (x). *Thou telleſt all my Wandrings* from "Thy Statutes (y): *Thou ſeeſt*, and Thou recordeſt, "*every Inſtance* of my *Diſobedience to Thee*, and of my "*Rebellion againſt Thee*: Thou ſeeſt it *in every aggra*"*vated Circumſtance* which *I can diſcern*, and *in many* "*more* which I have *never obſerved* or reflected upon. "*How then* ſhall I *appear in Thy Preſence*, or *lift up* "*my Face to Thee* (z)! The Remembrance of *the Sins of* "*my unconverted State*, and *the Failings* and *Infirmities* "*of my After-life*, may juſtly *confound me*: How much "more *ſuch a Scene*, as now lies *before my Conſcience*, "and *before Thine all-ſeeing Eye*? Under a Senſe of this, "I *am full of Confuſion* (a), and feel *a ſecret Regret* in

(u) Ezek. xvi. 63. (x) Pſal. lxix. 5. (y) Pſal. lvi. 8.
(z) Ezr. ix. 6. (a) Job x. 15.

" the Thought of *applying to Thee*: But, *Oh Lord*,
" *whom ſhould I go, but unto Thee* (b)? unto Thee,
" *whom* depends *my Life*, or *my Death*; unto The
" *who alone* canſt take away *that Burthen of Guil*
" which now preſſes me down to the Duſt; *who alo*
" canſt reſtore to my Soul *that Reſt and Peace* which
" have *loſt*, and which I deſerve *for ever to loſe*?

" Behold me, Oh Lord GOD, *falling down at Th*
" *Feet!* Behold me, *pleading guilty in Thy Preſence*, an
" *ſurrendering myſelf to that Juſtice* which I cann
" eſcape! I have not *one Word to offer* in my ow
" Vindication, in my own Excuſe. *Words*, far fro
" being able to clear up my Innocence, *can never ſuf*
" *ficiently deſcribe* the Enormity and Demerit of *my Sin*
" *Thou*, Oh Lord, and *Thou only* knoweſt to the full
" *how heinous* and *how aggravated* it is. *Thine Infini*
" *Underſtanding alone* can fathom *the Infinite Depth*
" *its Malignity*. *I am*, on many Accounts, *moſt unabl*
" *to do it*. I cannot conceive *the Glory of Thy Sacre*
" *Majeſty*, whoſe Authority I have *deſpiſed*; nor *th*
" *Number* and *Variety* of *thoſe Mercies*, which I hav
" *ſinned againſt*. I cannot conceive *the Value of th*
" *Blood of Thy dear Son*, which I have ungratefully
" *trampled under my Feet*; nor *the Dignity of that Bl*
" *ſed Spirit of Thine*, whoſe Agency I have, as far as
" could, *been endeavouring to oppoſe*, and whoſe Wor
" I have been, as with all my Might, *labouring to und*
" and *to tear up*, as it were, *that Plantation of H*
" *Grace*, which I ſhould rather have been willing to ha
" *guarded with my Life*, and *watered with my Blo*
" Oh *the Baſeneſs* and *Madneſs* of *my Conduct*! That
" ſhould *thus*, as it were, *rend open the Wounds of*
" *Soul*, of which I had died long 'ere this, had no
" *Thine own Hand* applied a Remedy, had not *Thine o*
" *Son* bled to prepare it! That I ſhould *violate th*
" *Covenant* I have *made with Thee by Sacrifice* (c), b
" the Memorials of *ſuch a Sacrifice* too, even of *Je*
" *my Lord*, whereby I am become *guilty of His Bo*
" *and Blood* (d)! That I ſhould *bring ſuch Diſhonour*
" *on Religion* too, by ſo unſuitable a Walk, and pe
" ha

(b) John vi. 68. (c) Pſal. l. 5. (d) 1 Cor. xi. 27.

haps *open the Mouths of its greateſt Enemies* to inſult it upon my Account!

" I wonder, Oh Lord GOD, *that I am here* to own all this. I wonder, Thou haſt not long ago appeared *as a ſwift Witneſs againſt me* (e); that Thou haſt not *diſcharged the Thunderbolts of Thy flaming Wrath* againſt me, and *cruſhed me into Hell*; making me there *a Terror to all about me*, as well as *to myſelf*, by diſtinguiſhed Vengeance and Ruin.

" Oh GOD, *Thy Patience* is *marvellous!* But how much *more marvellous* is *Thy Grace*, which after all this *invites me to Thee!* While I am here *giving Judgment againſt myſelf*, that I *deſerve to die*, to *die for ever*, Thou art *ſending me the Words of everlaſting Life*, and *calling me*, as *a backſliding Child*, to *return unto Thee* (f). *Behold* therefore, *Oh Lord*, invited by Thy Word, and encouraged by Thy Grace, *I come*; and great as *my Tranſgreſſions* are, I humbly beſeech Thee *freely to pardon them:* Becauſe I know, that tho' *my Sins have reached unto Heaven* (g), and are *lifted up even to the Skies* (h), *Thy Mercy*, Oh Lord, *is above the Heavens* (i). Extend *that Mercy* to me, Oh Heavenly Father; and *diſplay*, in this illuſtrious Inſtance, *the Riches of thy Grace*, and *the Prevalency of Thy Son's Blood!* For ſurely, if *ſuch crimſon Sins as mine* may be made *white as Snow, and as Wooll* (k), and if *ſuch a Revolter* as I am *be brought to eternal Glory, Earth muſt*, ſo far as it is known, *be filled with Wonder*, and *Heaven with Praiſe*; and *the greateſt Sinner* may chearfully *apply for Pardon*, if I *the chief of Sinners* find it. And Oh that, when I have *lain mourning*, and as it were *bleeding at Thy Feet*, as long as Thou thinkeſt proper, Thou wouldſt at length *heal this Soul of mine* which hath ſinned againſt Thee; and *give me Beauty for Aſhes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs* (l)! Oh that Thou wouldſt at length *reſtore unto me the Joy of Thy Salvation*, and *make me to hear* Songs of *Gladneſs*,

(e) Mal. iii. 5. (f) Jer. iii. 22. (g) Rev. xviii. 5. Jer. li. 9. (i) Pſal. cviii. 4. (k) Iſa. i. 18. Iſa. lxi. 3.

" *that the Bones which Thou haſt broken may rejoice* (m)
" *Then*, when *a Senſe of Thy forgiving Love* is ſhed
" *broad upon my Heart*, and it is *cheared with the Vi*
" *of Pardon*, I will *proclaim Thy Grace to others*;
" *will teach Tranſgreſſors Thy Ways, and Sinners ſh*
" *be converted unto Thee* (n): Thoſe, that have be
" *backſliding from Thee*, ſhall be *encouraged to ſeek Th*
" by my happy Experience, which I will *gladly pr*
" *claim for Thy Glory*, tho' it be *to my own Shame a*
" *Confuſion of Face*. And may this *Joy of the Lord*
" *my Strength* (o), ſo that in it *I may ſerve Thee* hen
" forward *with a Vigour and Zeal* far beyond what
" have hitherto known!

" This I would *ask with all humble Submiſſion* to Th
" Will; for I *preſume not to inſiſt upon it*. If Thou ſhoul
" *ſee fit* to *make me a Warning to others*, by appointi
" that I ſhould *walk all my Days in Darkneſs*, and
" laſt *die under a Cloud*, *Thy Will be done!* But, O
" GOD, *extend Mercy for Thy Son's Sake* to this ſin
" Soul *at laſt*; and give me *ſome Place*, tho' it were
" *the Feet* of all Thine other Servants, *in the Region*
" *Glory!* Oh *bring me at length*, tho' it ſhould be *th*
" *the gloomieſt Valley* that any have ever paſſed, *into th*
" *bleſſed World*, where I ſhall *depart from GOD no mo*
" where I ſhall *wound my own Conſcience*, and *diſhon*
" *Thy Holy Name no more!* Then ſhall *my Tongue*
" *looſed*, how long ſoever it might *here be bound* und
" the Confuſion of Guilt; and *immortal Praiſes* ſh
" be paid *to that* victorious *Blood*, which has *redeem*
" *ſuch an infamous Slave of Sin*, as I muſt acknowled
" myſelf to be, and *brought me*, from renewed Bond
" and repeated Pollution, *to ſhare the Dignity and Ho*
" *neſs* of thoſe, who are *Kings and Prieſts unto GO*
" Amen."

(m) Pſal. li. 8, 12. (n) Pſal. li. 13. (o) Neh. viii. 10.

CHA

CHAP. XXIV.

The Case of the CHRISTIAN under the Hidings of GOD's Face.

The Phrase Scriptural. §. 1. *It signifies the withdrawing the Tokens of Divine Favour,* §. 2. *which are chiefly Spiritual.* §. 3. *As the Reader knows not how soon the Case may be his own,* §. 4. *and will, if it be so, find it a very sorrowful one;* §. 5. *the following Directions are given:* (1.) *To be humble and patient under it.* §. 6. (2.) *To go on steadily in the Way of Duty.* §. 7. *And,* (3.) *To renew a believing Application to the Blood of Jesus.* §. 8. *An humble Supplication for one under these mournful Exercises of Mind.*

§. 1. THERE is *a Case* which often occurs *in the Christian Life,* which they who accustom themselves much to the Exercise of Devotion, have been used to call *the Hiding of GOD's Face.* It is a Phrase *borrowed from the Word of GOD,* which I hope may *shelter it from Contempt* at the first Hearing. It will be my Business in *this Chapter,* to *state it* as plainly as I can, and then to *give some Advices* as to your own Conduct when you *fall into it,* as it is *very probable you* may before you have finished your Journey thro' this Wilderness.

§. 2. THE *Meaning of it* may partly be understood by *the opposite Phrase* of GOD's *causing His Face to shine upon a Person,* or *lifting up upon him the Light of His Countenance.* This seems to carry in it *an Allusion* to the *pleasant* and *delightful Appearance* which *the Face of a Friend* has, and especially if in a superior Relation of Life, when he converses with those whom he loves and

and delights in. Thus *Job*, when ſpeaking of *the Regard paid him* by his Attendants, ſays, *If I ſmiled upon them, they believed it not, and the Light of my Countenance they caſt not down* (a); that is, they were careful, in ſuch an agreeable Circumſtance, to do *nothing to diſpleaſe me*, or (as we ſpeak) *to cloud my Brow*. And *David*, when expreſſing his Deſire of *the Manifeſtation of* GOD's *Favour* to him, ſays, *Lord, lift Thou up the Light of Thy Countenance upon me*; and as the Effect of it declares, *Thou haſt put Gladneſs in my Heart, more than if Corn and Wine increaſed* (b). Nor is it impoſſible, that *in this Phraſe*, as uſed by *David*, there may be ſome *Alluſion* to *the bright ſhining forth of the Shekinah* upon ſome publick Occaſions, as *a Token of Divine Favour and Acceptance*. On the other hand therefore, for GOD *to hide His Face* muſt imply *the withholding the Tokens of His Favour*, and muſt be eſteemed *a Mark of His Diſpleaſure*. Thus *Iſaiah* uſes it; *Your Iniquities have ſeparated between you and your* GOD, *and your Sins have hid His Face from you, that He will not hear* (c). And again, *Thou haſt hid Thy Face from us*, as not regarding the Calamities we ſuffer, *and haſt conſumed us, becauſe of our Iniquities* (d). So likewiſe, for GOD *to hide His Face from our Sins* (e), ſignifies *to overlook them*, and to *take no farther Notice* of them. The *ſame Idea* is, at other Times, expreſſed by *hiding His Eyes* (f) from Perſons of a Character *diſagreeable to Him*, when they come to addreſs Him with their Petitions. This is plainly *the Scriptural Senſe* of the Word; and agreeably to this, it is *generally uſed* by *Chriſtians* in our Day, and every Thing which ſeems *a Token of Divine Diſpleaſure towards them* is expreſſed by it.

§. 3. IT is farther to be obſerved here, that *the Things* which they judge to be *Manifeſtations of Divine Favour* towards them, or *Complacency* in them, are not *only* nor *chiefly*, *of a Temporal Nature*, or ſuch as merely relate to *the Bleſſings of the Animal* and *Periſhing Life*. *David*, tho' *the Promiſes of the Law* had a continual *Reference to ſuch*, yet was taught to *look farther*, and deſcribes them as *preferable to*, and therefore plainly diſtinct

(a) Job xxix. 24. (b) Pſal. iv. 6, 7. (c) Iſai. lix. 2.
(d) Iſai. lxiv. 7. (e) Pſal. li. 9. (f) Iſai. i. 15.

distinct from, *the Blessings of the Corn-Floor* or *the Wine-Press* (g). And if *you*, to whom I am now addressing, *do not know them to be so*, it is plain you are *quite ignorant* of the Subject we are enquiring into, and indeed are yet to take out *the first Lessons* of true *Religion*. All that *David* says, of *beholding the Beauty of the Lord* (h), or being *satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness, when He remembered Him on his Bed* (i), as well as *with the Goodness of His House, even of His Holy Temple* (k), is to be taken *in the same Sense*, and can need *very little Explication* to the truly experienced Soul. But *those* that have *known the Light of GOD's Countenance*, and *the Shinings of His Face*, will, in Proportion to the Degree of *that Knowledge*, be able to *form some Notion of the Hiding of His Face*, or *the withdrawing of the Tokens* He has given His People *of His Presence and Favour*, which sometimes greatly *imbitters Prosperity*; as where *the contrary* is found, it *sweetens Affliction*, and often *swallows up the Sense of it*.

§. 4. And give me Leave to remind you, *my Christian Friend*, (for under that Character I now address my Reader,) that to be thus *deprived of the Sense of GOD's Love*, and of *the Tokens of His Favour*, may soon be *the Case with you*, tho' you may *never have the Pleasure* to *see the Candle of the Lord shining upon you*, or tho' it may even *seem to be Sun-shine* and *High Noon* in your Souls. You may *lose your lively Views* of the *Divine Perfections* and *Glories*, in the Contemplation of which you *now find that inward Satisfaction*. You may think of the *Divine Wisdom* and *Power*, of the *Divine Mercy* and *Fidelity*, as well as of *His Righteousness* and *Holiness*, and feel *little inward Complacency of Soul* in the View: It may be, with Respect to *any living Impression*, as if it were *the Contemplation* merely *of a common Object*. It may seem to you, as if you had *lost all Idea* to those important Words, tho' *the View* has some times *swallowed up your whole Soul* in Transports of Astonishment, Admiration, and Love. You may *lose your delightful Sense* of the *Divine Favour*. It may be Matter of *great and sad Doubt* with you, whether you do indeed *belong to*

(g) Psal. iv. 7. (h) Psal. xxvii. 4. (i) Psal. lxiii. 5, 6.
(k) Psal. lxv. 4.

to GOD; and all *the Work of His Blessed Spirit* may be *so veiled* and *shaded* in the Soul, that *the peculiar Characters*, by which the Hand of that Sacred Agent might be distinguished, shall be *in a great Measure lost*; and you may be *ready to imagine*, you have *only deluded yourself* in all the former Hopes you have entertained. In Consequence of this, *those Ordinances*, in which you now *rejoice*, may grow *very uncomfortable to you*, even when you do indeed desire *Communion with GOD in them*. You may *hear* the most delightful *Evangelical Truths* opened, you may hear *the Privileges of GOD's Children* most affectionately represented, and *not be aware* that you have *any Part or Lot in this Matter*; and from *that very Coldness* and *Insensibility* may be drawing *a farther Argument*, that you have *nothing to do with them*. And then *your Heart* may *meditate Terror* (l), and under the Distress that overwhelms you, *your dearest Enjoyments* may be reflected upon as *adding to the Weight of it*, and *making it more sensible*, while you consider that you had *once such a Taste* for these Things, and have *now lost it all*. So that perhaps it may *seem to you*, that *they, who never felt* any Thing at all of *Religious Impressions*, are *happier than you*, or at least are *less miserable*. You may perhaps, *in these melancholy Hours*, even *doubt*, whether you *ever prayed at all*; and whether all that you called *your Enjoyment of GOD*, were not *some false Delight* excited by the great *Enemy of Souls*, to make you apprehend that *your State was good*, that so you might continue *his more secure Prey*.

§. 5. SUCH as this may be *your Case* for a considerable Time; and *Ordinances* may be *attended in vain*, and *the Presence of GOD* may be *in vain* sought in them. You may *pour out your Soul in Private*, and then come *to Publick Worship*, and find *little Satisfaction in either*, but be forced to take up *the Psalmist's* Complaint; *O GOD, I cry in the Day-Time, but Thou hearest not; and in the Night-Season, and am not silent* (m); or that of *Job, Behold, I go forward, but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; on the Left Hand where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; He hideth Himself on the Right Hand, that I cannot*

(l) Isa. xxxiii. 18. (m) Psal. xxii. 2.

Him (n): So that *all*, which *looked like Religion* in your Mind, ſhall ſeem, as it were, to be *melted into Grief*, or *chilled into Fear*, or *cruſhed into a deep Senſe of your own Unworthineſs*; in Conſequence of which, you *ſhall not dare* ſo much as *to lift up your Eyes* before GOD, and be almoſt *aſhamed* to *take your Place* in a worſhipping Aſſembly *among any* that you think *His Servants*. I have known *this* to be *the Caſe* of ſome *excellent Chriſtians*, whoſe *Improvements in Religion* have been diſtinguiſhed, and whom GOD hath *honoured* above many of their Brethren in what He hath *done for them*, and *by them*. Give me leave therefore, having thus deſcribed it, to offer you *ſome plain Advices* with Regard to it; and let not *that* be imputed to *Enthuſiaſtick Fancy*, which proceeds from an intimate and frequent *View of Facts*, on the one hand, and from a ſincere affectionate *Deſire*, on the other, *to relieve* the tender pious Heart *in ſo deſolate a State*. At leaſt, I am perſuaded, *the Attempt* will *not be overlooked* or *diſapproved* by Him, who is *the great Shepherd of the Sheep* (o), who has charged us to *comfort the Feeble-minded* (p).

§. 6. Now *the Advices*, I have to give you, are *very plain* and *obvious*: They carry *their own Reaſon* along with them; and I hope, *that* will lead you to *regard them* as apparently *reaſonable*, rather than to *neglect them* becauſe they are *plain*. In theſe ſad Circumſtances, *be humble*, and *be patient*. Own, that *the LORD is righteous*, but that *you have ſinned* (q). *His Ear is not heavy, that it cannot hear; but your Iniquities have ſeparated between you and your GOD, and your Sins have hid His Face from you, that He will not hear* (r). Bow yourſelf therefore before Him, and *own*, that you have *deſerved all*; *deſerved*, not only *that your Sun* ſhould be *clouded*, but that it ſhould *go down*, and *ariſe no more*, but *leave your Soul* in a State of *everlaſting Darkneſs*. And while *the Shade* continues, *be not impatient*. *Fret not your ſelf in any wiſe*, but rather, with a holy Calmneſs and Gentleneſs of Soul, *wait on the Lord* (s). Be willing to *ſtay His Time*, willing to *bear His Frown*, in

(n) Job xxiii. 8, 9. (o) Heb. xiii. 20. (p) 1 Theſſ. v. 14.
(q) Lam. i. 18. (r) Iſai. lix. 1, 2. (s) Pſal. xxxvii. 8, 34.

in humble *Hope* that *He will* at length *return and ha*
Compaſſion on you (t). He *has not* utterly *forgotten to*
gracious, nor reſolved, that *He will be favourable*
more (u). *For the Lord will not caſt off for ever*; *t*
tho' He cauſe Grief, yet will He have Compaſſion acco
ing to the Multitude of His Mercies (x). It is compa
tively but *for a ſmall Moment* that *He hides His F*
from you; but you may humbly hope, that *with gr*
Mercies He will gather you, and that *with everlaſti*
Kindneſs He will have Mercy on you (y). Theſe *ſuita*
Words are *not mine*, but *His*; and they *wear this*, as
the very *Front* of them, That *a Soul, under the Hidi*
of GOD's Face, may at leaſt *be one* whom *He will gath*
and to whom *He will extend everlaſting Favour*.

§. 7. But while *the Darkneſs* continues, *go on in*
Way of your Duty: Continue *the Uſe of Means a*
Ordinances: *Read*, and *meditate*: *Pray*, yes, and *ſ*
the Praiſes of GOD too, tho' it may be *with a hea*
Heart. Follow *the Footſteps of His Flock* (z); you m
perhaps *meet the Shepherd of Souls* in doing it. *Pl*
yourſelf at leaſt *in His Way*. It is poſſible, you m
by this Means *get a kind Look from Him*; and one *L*
one *Turn of Thought* which may happen *in a Mome*
may as it were *create an Heaven* in your Soul *at o*
Go to *the Table of the Lord*. If you *cannot rejoice*,
and *mourn there*. Go and *mourn that Saviour*, wh
by your Sins *you have pierced* (a); go and *lament*
Breaches of that *Covenant*, which you have there *ſo*
ten confirmed. Christ may perhaps *make him*
known unto you *in the Breaking of Bread* (b), and y
may find, to your Surprize, that *He hath been near*
when you imagined He was *at the greateſt Diſtance* fr
you; *near you*, when you thought you were *caſt out fr*
His Preſence. Seek *your Comfort* in *ſuch Employments*
theſe; and *not* in the *vain Amuſements of this Wor*
and in the *Pleaſures of Senſe*. I ſhall never forget *th*
affectionate Expreſſion, which I am well aſſured bro
out from *an eminently pious Heart*, then *almoſt ready*
" *bre*

(t) Jer. xii. 15. (u) Pſal. lxxvii. 7, 9. (x) Lam. iii. 31, 32.
(y) Iſai. liv. 7, 8. (z) Cant. i. 8. (a) Zech. xii. 10.
(b) Luk. xxiv. 35.

break under its Sorrows of this Kind: "*Lord*, if I *may* "*not enjoy Thee*, let me *enjoy nothing else*; but go down "*mourning after Thee* to the Grave!" I wondered not to hear, that almoſt as ſoon as *this Sentiment* had been breathed *out before* GOD in Prayer, *the Burthen* was taken *off*, and *the Joy of* GOD's *Salvation reſtored*.

§. 8. I SHALL add but *one Advice more*; and that is, That you *renew your Application* to the *Blood of Jeſus*, thro' whom *the Reconciliation* between GOD and your Souls *has been accompliſhed*. It is *He* that *is our Peace*, and *by His Blood* it is that *we are made nigh* (c): It is *in Him*, as *the Beloved* of His Soul, that GOD declares, He is *well pleaſed* (d); and it is *in Him* that *we are made accepted, to the Glory of His Grace* (e). Go therefore, *Oh Chriſtian*, and *apply by Faith* to a *crucified Saviour*: Go and *apply to Him* as to *a merciful High-Prieſt*, and *pour out thy Complaint before Him, and ſhew before Him thy Trouble* (f). Lay open the Diſtreſs and Anguiſh of thy Soul *to Him*, who once knew what it was to ſay, (Oh aſtoniſhing! that He of all others ſhould ever have ſaid it,) *My GOD, my GOD, why haſt Thou forſaken me* (g)? Look up for Pity and Relief *to Him*, who *Himſelf ſuffered, being* not only *tempted*, but with regard to ſenſible Manifeſtations *deſerted*; that He might *know how to pity* thoſe that are in ſuch a melancholy Caſe, and *be ready*, as well as *able*, *to ſuccour* them (h). He is *Immanuel*, GOD *with us* (i); and it is only *in and thro' Him* that His *Father ſhines forth* upon us with the mildeſt Beams of *Mercy* and of *Love*. Let it be therefore your immediate Care, to *renew your* Acquaintance with Him. *Review* the Records of *His* Life and *Death*: Hear *His Words*: Behold *His Actions*: And when you *do ſo*, ſurely you will find *a ſacred Sweetneſs* diffuſing itſelf over your Soul. You will be brought into *a calm, gentle, ſilent Frame*, in which *Faith* and Love will *operate powerfully*, and GOD may probably make *the ſtill ſmall Voice* of His *comforting Spirit* to be

 heard,

(c) Eph. ii. 13, 14. (d) Mat. iii. 17. (e) Eph. i. 6.
(f) Pſal. cxlii. 2. (g) Mat. xxvii. 46. (h) Heb. ii. 18.
(i) Mat. i. 23.

heard (k), till your Soul *bursts out into a Song of Pra*
and you may be *made glad according to the Days*
which you have been afflicted (l). In the mean Ti
such Language, as the following *Supplication speaks*, m
be *suitable*.

An humble SUPPLICATION *for one under the Hidings*
GOD's Face.

" BLESSED GOD! *with Thee is the Fountain*
" *Life* (m), and Thou art *the Eternal Source*
" *Being*, and of *Happineſs*. I adore Thy Name, t
" I have ever *taſted of Thy Streams*; that I have e
" *felt the peculiar Pleaſure* ariſing from *the Light of*
" *Countenance*, and *the Shedding abroad of Thy Love*
" the Soul. But alas, *theſe delightful Seaſons* are
" to me *no more*; and the *Remembrance of them* enga
" me to *pour out my Soul within me* (n). I would c
" as I have *formerly done*, and *call Thee*, with the ſa
" Endearment, *My Father* and *my GOD*: But alas,
" *know not how* to do it. *Guilt* and *Fear* ariſe,
" *forbid the delightful Language*. I ſeek Thee,
" *Lord*, but I *ſeek Thee in vain*. I would *pray*,
" *my Lips are ſealed up*. I would *read Thy Word*,
" all *the Promiſes of it* are *veiled from mine Eyes*. I
" quent *thoſe Ordinances*, which have been formerly
" *nouriſhing* and *comfortable* to my Soul; but alas, t
" are only *the Shadows of Ordinances*: The *Subſta*
" is *gone*: The *animating Spirit* is *fled*, and leaves t
" now at beſt *but the Image* of what I *once knew the*
" But, LORD, *haſt Thou caſt off for ever, and*
" *Thou be favourable no more* (o)? Haſt Thou in
" Judgment *determined*, that my Soul muſt be left
" *perpetual Winter*, the ſad Emblem of *Eternal D*
" *neſs*? Indeed *I deſerve* it ſhould be ſo. I ackn
" ledge, Oh Lord, *I deſerve* to be *caſt away from*
" *Preſence* with Diſdain; to be *ſunk lower* than I
" *much lower*: I deſerve, to have *the Shadow of D*

(k) 1 Kings xix. 12. (l) Pſal. xc. 15. (m) Pſal. xxxvi.
(n) Pſal. xlii. 4. (o) Pſal. lxxvii. 7.

" *upon mine Eye-lids* (p), and even to be *surrounded* with " *the thick Gloom* of the *Infernal Prison*. But hast " Thou not *raised Multitudes*, who have *deserved like* " *me* to be *delivered into Chains of Darkness* (q), to the " *Visions of Thy Glory above*, where *no Cloud* can ever " *interpose* between Thee and their rejoicing Spirits? " *Have Mercy upon me, Oh Lord, have Mercy upon* " *me* (r)! and tho' *mine Iniquities* have now justly *caused* " *Thee to hide Thy Face from me* (s), yet be Thou rather " pleased, agreeably to the gracious Language of Thy " Word, to *hide Thy Face from my Sins, and to blot out* " *all mine Iniquities* (t)! Chear my Heart with the To- " kens of Thy returning Favour, and *say unto my Soul,* " *I am thy Salvation* (u)!

" Remember, *Oh Lord GOD*, remember *that* " *dreadful Day*, in which *Jesus* Thy dear Son *endured* " what *my Sins have deserved!* Remember *that Agony*, " in which *He poured out His Soul* before Thee, and " said, *My GOD, my GOD, why hast Thou forsaken* " *me* (x)! Did He not, Oh Lord, *endure all this*, that " *humble Penitents* might *thro' Him* be *brought near un-* " *to Thee*, and might *behold Thee* with Pleasure, as *their* " *Father*, and *their GOD? Thus* do I desire *to come* " unto Thee. *Blessed Saviour*, art Thou not appointed " *to give unto them that mourn in Zion Beauty for Ashes,* " *the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of* " *Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness* (y)? Oh wash away " *my Tears*, anoint my Head with *the Oil of Gladness*, " and *clothe me with the Garments of Salvation* (z)!

" *Oh that I knew where I might find Thee* (a)! Oh " that I knew *what it is*, that has *engaged Thee* to *de-* " *part from me!* I am *searching* and *trying my Ways* (b): " Oh that Thou wouldst *search me, and know my Heart*; " *try me, and know my Thoughts*; and *if there be any* " *wicked Way in me*, discover it, and *lead me in the* " *Way everlasting* (c); in *that Way*, in which I may

(p) Job xvi. 16. (q) 2 Pet. ii. 4. (r) Psal. cxxiii. 3.
(s) Isai. lix. 2. (t) Psal. li. 9. (u) Psal. xxxv. 3.
(x) Mat. xxvii. 46. (y) Isai. lxi. 3. (z) Isai. lxi. 10.
(a) Job xxiii. 3. (b) Lam. iii. 40. (c) Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24.

" *find Reſt* and Peace *for my Soul* (d), and *feel the Diſco-*
" *veries* of *Thy Love in Chriſt!*

" Oh GOD, *who didſt command the Light to ſhine*
" *out of Darkneſs* (e), ſpeak but the Word, and *Light*
" *ſhall dart into my Soul* at once! *Open Thou my Lips,*
" *and my Mouth ſhall ſhew forth Thy Praiſe* (f), ſhall
" burſt out *into a chearful Song*, which ſhall *diſplay be-*
" *fore thoſe*, whom *my preſent Dejections* may have *diſ-*
" *couraged*, the *Pleaſures* and *Supports* of *Religion!*

" Yet, *Lord*, on the whole, *I ſubmit to Thy Will!*
" If it is *thus* that *my Faith* muſt be *exerciſed*, by *walk-*
" *ing in Darkneſs* for *Days*, and *Months*, and *Years to*
" *come*, how long ſoever they may ſeem, how long ſo-
" ever they may be, *I will ſubmit*. Still will I adore
" Thee, as *the GOD of Iſrael*, and *the Saviour*, tho'
" *Thou art a GOD that hideſt Thyſelf* (g); ſtill will I
" *truſt in the Name of the Lord, and ſtay* myſelf *upon*
" *my GOD* (h); *truſting in Thee, tho' Thou ſlay me* (i),
" and *waiting for Thee, more than they that watch for*
" *the Morning, yea, more than they that watch for the*
" *Morning* (k): Peradventure *in the Evening Time it*
" *may be Light* (l). I know, Thou haſt ſometimes
" *manifeſted Thy Compaſſions* to Thy *dying Servants*,
" and given them, *in the loweſt Ebb* of their Nature's
" Spirits, *a full Tide* of *Divine Glory*, thus turning
" *Darkneſs* into *Light before them* (m). So may it
" pleaſe Thee to gild *the Valley of the Shadow of Death*
" with the Light of *Thy Preſence*, when I am *paſſing*
" *thro' it*, and to ſtretch forth *Thy Rod and Thy Staff* to
" *comfort me* (n), that *my Tremblings* may ceaſe, and *the*
" *Gloom* may echo with *Songs of Praiſe!* But if it be
" *Thy Sovereign Pleaſure*, that *Diſtreſs* and *Darkneſs*
" ſhould *ſtill continue* to the laſt Motion of my Pulſe,
" and the laſt Gaſp of my Breath, Oh let it *ceaſe with*
" *the parting Struggle*, and bring me to *that Light*
" which is *ſown for the Righteous*, and to *that Gladneſs*
" which is reſerved *for the Upright in Heart* (o); to *that*
" *unclouded*

(d) Jer. vi. 16. (e) 2 Cor. iv. 6. (f) Pſal. li. 15.
(g) Iſai. xlv. 15. (h) Iſai. l. 10. (i) Job xiii. 15.
(k) Pſal. cxxx. 6. (l) Zech. xiv. 7. (m) Iſai. xlii. 16.
(n) Pſal. xxiii. 4. (o) Pſal. xcvii. 11.

" unclouded *Regions of Everlasting Splendor and Joy,*
" where the full *Anointings of Thy Spirit* shall be *poured*
" *out* on all Thy People, and Thou wilt *no more hide*
" *Thy Face from* any of *them* (p)!

" This, *Lord*, is *Thy Salvation, for which I am*
" *waiting* (p); and whilst I feel *the Desires of my Soul*
" drawn out after it, I will *never despair* of obtaining
" it. Continue and increase *those Desires*, and at length
" *satisfy* and *exceed them all, thro' the Riches of Thy*
" *Grace in Christ Jesus!* Amen."

(p) Ezek. xxxix. 29. (q) Gen. xlix. 18.

CHAP. XXV.

The CHRISTIAN struggling under great and heavy Afflictions.

Here it is advised, (1.) *That Afflictions should be expected* §. 1. (2.) *That the righteous Hand of GOD should be acknowledged in them, when they come.* §. 2. (3.) *That they should be borne with Patience.* §. 3. (4.) *That the Divine Conduct in them should be cordially approved.* §. 4. (5.) *That Thankfulness should be maintained in the midst of Trials.* §. 5. (6.) *That the Design of Afflictions should be diligently enquired into, and all proper Assistance taken in discovering it.* §. 6. (7.) *That when it is discovered, it should humbly be complied with and answered.* §. 7. *A Prayer suited to such a Case.*

§. 1. SINCE *Man is born unto Trouble, as the Sparks fly upward* (a), it will certainly be *prudent* and *necessary*, that we should *all expect* to meet with *Trials* and *Afflictions*; and that *you*, Reader, whoever you are, should be endeavouring to *gird on your Armour*, and put yourself *into a Posture* to *encounter those Trials*, which will *fall to your Lot*, as *a Man*, and *a Christian*. Prepare yourself to *receive Afflictions*, and to *endure them* in a Manner *agreeable to both those Characters*. In this View, when you see *others under the Burthen*, consider how possible it is, that *you may be called out to the very same Difficulties*, or to *others equal to them*. Put your Soul, as *in the Place of theirs*. Think, how you could *endure the Load*, under which they lie; and endeavour at once, to *comfort them*, and to *strengthen*

(a) Job v. 7.

your own Heart; or rather *pray*, that *GOD would do it*. And observing *how liable* mortal Life is *to such Sorrows*, moderate *your Expectations from it*; raise your Thoughts *above it*; and form *your Schemes of Happiness*, only for *that World*, where they *cannot be disappointed*: In the mean Time, *blessing GOD*, that *your Prosperity* is *lengthened out* thus far, and ascribing it to *His special Providence*, that you continue *so long unwounded*, when so many *Showers of Arrows* are flying around you, and so many are *falling by them, on the Right Hand, and on the Left*.

§. 2. When at length *your Turn comes*, as it certainly will, *from the first Hour* in which *an Affliction seizes you*, realize to yourself *the Hand of GOD in it*, and lose not *the View of Him* in any *Second Cause*, which may have proved *the immediate Occasion*. Let it be *your first Care*, to *humble yourself under the mighty Hand of GOD, that He may exalt you in due Time* (b). Own, that *He is just in all that is brought upon you* (c), and that in all these Things *He punishes you less than your Iniquities deserve* (d). Compose yourself to *bear His Hand* with *Patience*, to *glorify His Name* by a *Submission to His Will*, and to *fall in with the gracious Design of this Visitation*, as well as to *wait the Issue of it quietly*, whatsoever the Event may be.

§. 3. Now that *Patience* may *have its perfect Work* (e), reflect frequently, and deeply, upon *your own Meanness* and *Sinfulness*. Consider, how often *every Mercy* has been *forfeited*, and *every Judgment deserved*. And consider too, how long *the Patience of GOD* hath *borne with you*, and how wonderfully it is *still exerted towards you*; and indeed, not only *His Patience*, but *His Bounty too*. *Afflicted as you are*, (for I speak to you now as actually *under the Pressure*,) look round and survey *your remaining Mercies*, and be gratefully sensible of them. Make *the Supposition* of their being removed: What if *GOD* should *stretch out His Hand* against you, and add *Poverty* to *Pain*, or *Pain* to *Poverty*, or *the Loss of Friends* to both; or *the Death of surviving Friends* to that of *those* whom you are *now mourning over*; would not *the Wound* be *more*

(b) 1 Pet. v. 6. (c) Neh. ix. 33. (d) Ezr. ix. 13.
(e) Jam. i. 4.

more grievous? Adore *His Goodneſs*, that *this* is *not the Caſe*; and take heed, leſt *your Unthankfulneſs* ſhould *provoke Him* to *multiply your Sorrows*. Conſider alſo *the Need* you have *of Diſcipline*; how *wholeſome* it may prove to your Soul, and what *merciful Deſigns* our *Heavenly Father* has, in *all the Corrections* He ſends upon *His Children*.

§. 4. NAY I will add, That in Conſequence of all theſe Conſiderations it may well be expected, not only that you ſhould *ſubmit to your Afflictions* as what you cannot avoid, but that you ſhould *ſweetly acquieſce in them* and *approve them*; that you ſhould not only *juſtify*, but *glorify GOD* in ſending them; that you ſhould *glorify Him* with *your Heart*, and with *your Lips* too. Think not *Praiſe unſuitable* on ſuch an Occaſion; nor think *that Praiſe alone* to be *ſuitable*, which takes its Riſe from *remaining Comforts*: But know that it is *your Duty*, not only to be *thankful in your Afflictions*, but to be *thankful on Account of them*.

§. 5. GOD Himſelf has ſaid, *In every Thing give Thanks* (f); and He has taught *his Servants* to ſay, *Yea alſo we glory in Tribulation* (g). And moſt certain it is, that *to true Believers* they are *Inſtances of Divine Mercy*; for *whom the Lord loveth He chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom He receiveth* to peculiar and diſtinguiſhed Endearment (h). View *your preſent Afflictions* in this Light, *as Chaſtiſements of Love*; and then let your own Heart ſay, whether *Love* does not *demand Praiſe*. Think with yourſelf, it is *thus* that GOD is making me *conformable to His own Son*; it is *thus* that He is *training me up for compleat Glory*. Thus He *kills my Corruptions*; thus He *ſtrengthens my Graces*; thus He is *wiſely contriving* to *bring me nearer to Himſelf*, and to *ripen me* for the Honours of *His Heavenly Kingdom*. It is *if Need be*, that *I am in Heavineſs* (i); and He ſurely *knows* what *that Need* is, better than I can pretend to teach Him; and *knows* what *peculiar Property* there is *in this Affliction*, to anſwer *my preſent Neceſſity*, and to do me *that peculiar Good* which He is graciouſly *intending me by it*. This *Tribulation* ſhall *work Patience*

(f) 1 Theſſ. v. 18. (g) Rom. v. 3. (h) Heb. xii. 6.
(i) 1 Pet. i. 6.

and Patience Experience, and Experience a more aſſured *Hope*; even *a Hope* which *ſhall not make aſhamed*, while *the Love of GOD is ſhed abroad in my Heart* (k), and ſhines thro' my Affliction, like *the Sun* thro' a gently deſcending *Cloud*, darting in *Light* upon the *Shade*, and mingling *Fruitfulneſs* with *Weeping*.

§. 6. LET it be then *your earneſt Care*, while you thus *look on your Affliction*, whatever it may be, *as coming from the Hand of GOD*, to *improve it to the Purpoſes* for which it was ſent. And that you may *ſo improve it*, let it be *your firſt Concern*, to *know* what *thoſe Purpoſes* are. Summon up all the Attention of your Soul, to *hear the Rod, and* Him *who hath appointed it* (l); and *pray earneſtly*, that you may *underſtand its Voice*. Examine *your Life*, your *Words*, and your *Heart*; and *pray*, that *GOD* would ſo *guide your Enquiries*, that you may *return unto the Lord that ſmiteth you* (m). To aſſiſt you in this, call in *the Help of pious Friends*, and particularly *of your Miniſters:* Intreat, not only *their Prayers*, but *their Advices* too, as to the probable *Deſign of Providence*; and encourage them *freely to tell* you any Thing which occurs to their Minds upon this Head. And if ſuch an Occaſion ſhould lead them to *touch upon* ſome of *the Imperfections* of your *Character* and *Conduct*, look upon it as *a great Token of their Friendſhip*, and take it, not only *patiently*, but *thankfully*. It does but *ill become a Chriſtian* at any Time, to *reſent Reproofs* and *Admonitions*; and leaſt of all does it become him, when *the Rebukes of his Heavenly Father* are upon him. He ought rather to *ſeek Admonitions* at ſuch a Time as this, and voluntarily to *offer his Wounds to be ſearched* by a faithful and ſkilful Hand.

§. 7. AND when, by one Means or another, you have *got a Ray of Light to direct you* in the *Meaning* and *Language* of *ſuch Diſpenſations*, take heed, that you *do not*, in any Degree, *harden yourſelf againſt GOD*, and *walk contrary to him* (n). *Obſtinate Reluctance* to the apprehended *Deſign* of any providential Stroke is *inexpreſſibly provoking* to Him. Set yourſelf therefore to *an immediate Reformation* of whatever you diſcover amiſs; and labour

(k) Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. (l) Mic. vi. 9. (m) Iſai. ix. 13.
(n) Lev. xxvi. 27.

labour to learn *the general Leſſons* of greater *Submiſſion to GOD's Will*, of a more calm *Indifference to the World*, and of a cloſer *Attachment to Divine Converſe* and *to the Views* of an approaching *Inviſible State*. And whatever *particular Proportion* or *Correſpondence* you may obſerve, between *this* or *that Circumſtance* in *your Affliction*, and your *former Tranſgreſſions*, be eſpecially *careful to act* according to that *more peculiar* and *expreſs Voice of the Rod*. Then you may perhaps have *ſpecial* and *remarkable Reaſon* to ſay, that *it hath been good for you that you have been afflicted* (o); and with a Multitude of others, may learn to *number the Times* of *your ſharpeſt Trials*, among *the ſweeteſt* and *the moſt exalted Moments of your Life*. For this Purpoſe, let *Prayer* be your *frequent Employment*; and let *ſuch Sentiments as theſe*, if not in the very ſame Terms, be *often* and *affectionately poured out* before GOD.

An humble ADDRESS *to GOD, under the Preſſure of heavy Affliction.*

"OH THOU *ſupream*, yet *all-righteous* and *gracious* "*Governour* of the whole Univerſe! *Mean* and *inconſiderable* as *this little Province* of Thy *ſpacious* "*Empire* may appear, Thou *doſt not diſregard this* "*Earth* and *its Inhabitants*; but *attendeſt to its Concerns* "with the moſt condeſcending and gracious Regard. "*Thou reigneſt*, and *I rejoice in it*, as it is indeed "*Matter of univerſal Joy* (p). I believe *Thy univerſal* "*Providence* and *Care*; and I firmly believe *Thy ways* "*holy*, and *kind Interpoſition* in every Thing which re"*lates to me*, and to the Circumſtances of *my Abode* in "this Thy World. I would look *thro' all inſtrumental* "*Cauſes* unto Thee, *whoſe Eyes* are *upon all Thy Creatures*; to Thee, *who formeſt the Light, and createſt* "*Darkneſs*, who *makeſt Peace, and createſt Evil* (q); "to Thee, *Lord*, who at Thy Pleaſure canſt *exchange* "*the one for the other*, canſt *turn* the brighteſt Noon "into *Midnight*, and the darkeſt *Midnight* into Noon.

"Oh THOU *wiſe* and *merciful Governour of the* "*World!* I have often ſaid, *Thy Will be done*. And

"now

(o) Pſal. cxix. 71. (p) Pſal. xcvii. 1. (q) Iſai. xlv. 7.

" now, *Thy Will* is *painful to me.* But ſhall I upon that " Account *unſay* what I have *ſo often ſaid? GOD for-* " *bid!* I come *rather* to *lay myſelf down at Thy Feet,* " and to *declare my full* and *free Submiſſion* to all Thy " Sacred Pleaſure. *Oh Lord,* Thou art *Juſt* and " *Righteous in all!* I acknowledge, in Thy venerable " and awful Preſence, that *I have deſerved this,* and " Ten Thouſand Times *more* (r). I acknowledge, that " *it is of Thy Mercy, that I am not* utterly *conſumed* (s), " and *that any the leaſt Degree of Comfort* yet *remains.* Oh " Lord, I moſt readily *confeſs,* that *the Sins of one Day* " of my Life *have merited all theſe Chaſtiſements*; and " that *every Day* of my Life hath been *more or leſs ſin-* " *ful.* Smite therefore, Oh Thou *righteous Judge*; " and I will *ſtill adore Thee,* that inſtead of *the Scourge,* " Thou haſt not given *a Commiſſion to the Sword,* to do " *all the dreadful Work of Juſtice,* and to *pour out my* " *Blood* in Thy Preſence.

" But ſhall I *ſpeak unto Thee,* only *as my Judge?* " Oh Lord, Thou haſt taught me *a tenderer Name:* " Thou condeſcendeſt to call Thyſelf *my Father,* and to " ſpeak of *Correction* as *the Effect of Thy Love.* Oh " welcome, welcome, *thoſe Afflictions,* which are *the* " *Tokens* of *Thy Parental Affection,* the Marks of *my* " *Adoption into Thy Family!* Thou knoweſt, *what Diſ-* " *cipline I need.* Thou ſeeſt, Oh Lord, *that Bundle of* " *Folly,* which there is *in the Heart* of Thy poor *fro-* " *ward* and *thoughtleſs Child*; and knoweſt, *what Rods,* " and *what Strokes* are *needful* to drive it away. I " won'd therefore *be in humble Subjection to the Father* " *of Spirits,* who *chaſteneth me for my Profit*; would *be* " *in Subjection to Him, and live* (t). I would *bear* " *Thy Strokes,* not merely becauſe *I cannot reſiſt them,* " but becauſe *I love* and *truſt in Thee.* I would *ſweetly* " *acquieſce* and *reſt in Thy Will,* as well as *ſtoop to it*; " and would ſay, *Good is the Word of the Lord* (u). " And I *deſire,* that not only *my Lips,* but *my Soul* " may *acquieſce.* Yea, Lord, I would *praiſe Thee,* " that Thou wilt *ſhew ſo much Regard to me,* as to *ap-* " *ply ſuch Remedies* as theſe *to the Diſeaſes of my Mind,*

" and

(r) Ezr. ix. 13. (s) Lam. iii. 22. (t) Heb. xii. 9, 10.
(u) 2 Kings xx. 19.

" and art thus *kindly careful* to *train me up for Gl*
" I have *no Objection againſt being afflicted*, againſt b
" ing afflicted *in this particular Way*. *The* (*up* wh
" *my Father puts into mine Hand, ſhall I not drink it* (x)
" By Thine Aſſiſtance and Support *I will* Only
" pleaſed, *Oh Lord*, to *ſtand by me*, and ſometimes
" *grant me a favourable Look* in the Midſt of my S
" ferings! *Support my Soul*, I beſeech Thee, by *T*
" *Conſolations* mingled with *my Tribulations*; and
" ſhall *glory in thoſe Tribulations* that are *thus allay*
" It has been *the Experience of many*, who have *reflect*
" *on afflicted Days with Pleaſure*, and have ackno
" ledged that *their Comforts* have *ſwallowed up th*
" *Sorrows*. And after all that Thou haſt done, *a*
" *Thy Mercies reſtrained* (y)? *Is Thy Hand wax*
" *ſhort* (z), or canſt Thou not *ſtill do the ſame* for me
" If *my Heart* be *leſs tender*, *leſs ſenſible*, Th
" canſt *cure that Diſorder*, and canſt *make this Affli*
" *the Means of curing it*. Thus *let it be*; and
" length *in Thine own due Time*, and in *the Way* wh
" Thou ſhalt chuſe, *work out Deliverance for me*, a
" *ſhew me Thy marvellous Loving-kindneſs, Oh T*
" *that ſaveſt by Thy Right Hand them that put th*
" *Truſt in Thee* (a)! For I well know, that how *d*
" ſoever *this Night of Affliction* ſeem, if Thou ſay
" *Let there be Light*, there *ſhall be Light*. But I wo
" *urge nothing*, *before the Time* Thy Wiſdom and Goo
" neſs ſhall appoint. I am *much more concerned*, t
" *my Afflictions may be ſanctified*, than that *they may*
" *removed*. Number me, *Oh* GOD, among the *b*
" *py Perſons*, *whom* whilſt *Thou chaſteneſt*, Thou *tea*
" *eſt out of Thy Law* (b)! *Shew me*, I beſeech Th
" *wherefore Thou contendeſt with me* (c); and purify
" by *the Fire*, which is *ſo painful to me*, while I
" paſſing thro' it! Doſt Thou not *chaſten Thy Child*
" for this very End, *that they may be Partakers of Th*
" *Holineſs* (d)? Thou knoweſt, *Oh* GOD, it is *this*
" Soul is *breathing after*. I am *Partaker of Thy Bou*
" every Day and Moment of Life: I am *Partake*
"

(x) John xviii. 11. (y) Iſai. lxiii. 15. (z) Num. xi. 23.
(a) Pſal. xvii. 7. (b) Pſal. xciv. 12. (c) Job x. 2.
(d) Heb. xii. 10.

Thy Goſpel, and I hope, in ſome Meaſure too, *a Partaker of the Grace of it* operating on my Heart: Oh may it *operate more and more*, that I may largely *partake of Thine Holineſs* too; that I may *come nearer and nearer* in the Temper of my Mind *to Thee*, Oh Bleſſed GOD, the ſupream *Model of Perfection!* Let my *Soul be* (as it were) *melted*, tho' with the intenſeſt *Heat of the Furnace*, if I may but thereby *be made fit* for being *delivered into the Mold of Thy Goſpel*, and *bearing Thy* bright and amiable *Image!*

"Oh Lord, *my Soul longeth for Thee*; it *crieth out for the living* GOD (e)! In Thy Preſence, and under the Support of *Thy Love*, I can *bear any Thing*; and am *willing to bear it*, if I may grow *more lovely in Thine Eyes*, and *more meet for Thy Kingdom*. The *Days of my Affliction* will *have an End*; the *Hour* will at length *come*, when *Thou wilt wipe away all my Tears* (f). *Tho' it tarry*, I would *wait for it* (g). My *fooliſh Heart*, in the Midſt of all its Trials, is ready to *grow fond of this Earth*, diſappointing and grievous as it is: And *graciouſly*, Oh GOD, doſt Thou *deal with me*, in *breaking thoſe Bonds* that would *tie me faſter* to it. Oh let *my Soul* be *girding itſelf up*, and as it were *ſtretching its Wings*, in Expectation of *that bleſſed Hour*, when it ſhall *drop all its Sorrows* and *Incumbrances* at once, and *ſoar away* to *expatiate* with infinite Delight *in the Regions* of *Liberty*, *Peace*, and *Joy!* Amen."

(e) Pſal. lxxxiv. 2. (f) Rev. xxi. 4. (g) Hab. ii. 3.

CHAP. XXVI.

The CHRISTIAN assisted in examining in his Growth in Grace.

The Examination important. §. 1. *False Marks Growth to be avoided.* §. 2. *True Marks propos such as,* (1.) *Increasing Love to GOD.* §. 3. (2.) *nevolence to Men.* §. 4. (3.) *Candour of Dis tion.* §. 5. (4.) *Meekness under Injuries.* §. 6. (5.) *renity amidst the Uncertainties of Life.* §. 7. (6.) *mility,* §. 8. *especially as expressed in Evangelical ertises of Mind towards Christ and the Spirit.* § (7.) *Zeal for the Divine Honour.* §. 10. (8.) *H tual and chearful Willingness to exchange Wo whenever GOD shall appoint it.* §. 11. *Co sion.* §. 12. *The Christian breathing after Growt Grace.*

§. 1. IF by Divine Grace you have been *born again,* corruptible *Seed, but of incorruptible* (a), *by that Word of God, which liveth and abideth for* not only *in the World* and *Church,* but *in particular* in which it is sown; you will, *as new-born Babes, sire the sincere Milk of the Word, that you may thereby* (b). And tho', *in the most advanced Stat Religion* on Earth, we are *but Infants,* in Compa of what we *hope to be,* when *in the Heavenly Worl* arrive *unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the ture of the Fulness of Christ* (c); yet as we have Exercise of *a sanctified Reason,* we shall be *solicitous* we may be *growing* and *thriving Infants.* And my Reader, *if so be you have tasted that the Lord is*

(a) 1 Pet. i. 23. (b) 1 Pet. ii. 2. (c) Eph. iv. 13.

ious (d), will, I doubt not, *feel this Solicitude.* I would herefore endeavour to *assist you* in making *the Enquiry*, whether *Religion* be *on the Advance* in your Souls. And ere, I shall *warn you* against *some false Marks of Growth*; nd then, shall endeavour to *lay down others* on which ou may depend as *more solid.*——In this View I would bserve, that you are *not to measure your Growth in race*, only or chiefly by your *Advances in Knowledge*, r in *Zeal*, or any other *passionate Impression* of the Mind; o, nor by *the Fervour of Devotion* alone; but by *the abitual Determination of the Will* for *GOD*, and by our *prevailing Disposition* to *obey his Commands*, to *sub-mit to his Disposals*, and to *subserve his Schemes* in the World.

§. 2. It must be allowed, that *Knowledge*, and *Affec-on in Religion*, are indeed *desirable.* Without some Degree of *the former*, Religion cannot be *rational*; and is very reasonable to believe, that without some Degree of *the latter*, it cannot be *sincere*, in Creatures whose atures are constituted like ours. Yet there may be a reat Deal of *Speculative Knowledge*, and a great Deal of *rapturous Affection*, where there is *no true Religion* at ll; and therefore *much more*, where there is *no advanced tate* in it. The Exercise of our *rational Faculties* upon *he Evidences of Divine Revelation*, and upon *the De-laration of it* as contained *in Scripture*, may furnish *a ery wicked Man* with a well-digested *Body of orthodox Divinity* in his *Head*, when *not one single Doctrine of it* has ever reached *his Heart.* An eloquent *Description* of *he Sufferings of Christ*, of the *Solemnities of Judgment*, of the *Joys of the Blessed* and the *Miseries of the Damned*, might *move the Breast* even of a Man who *did not firmly believe them*; as we often find ourselves *strongly moved* by well-wrought *Narrations*, or *Discourses*, which at the same Time *we know* to have their Foundation in *Fiction.* *Natural Constitution*, or such *accidental Causes* as are some of them *too low* to be here mentioned, may *supply the Eyes* with *a Flood of Tears*, which may discharge itself plenteously upon almost *any Occasion* that shall first arise. And a proud *Impatience of Contradiction*, directly opposite as it is to the gentle *Spirit of Christianity*, may

(d) 1 Pet. ii. 3.

make a Man's Blood boil, when he hears *the Notions* he h *entertained*, and especially *those* which he has openly a and vigorously *espoused*, *disputed* and *opposed*. This m possibly lead him, in Terms of *strong Indignation*, *pour out his Zeal* and *his Rage* before GOD, in a fo Conceit, that, *as the* GOD *of Truth*, He is *the Patr* of those *favourite Doctrines*, by whose *fair Appearan* perhaps he himself is *misled*. And if these *speculati Refinements*, or these *affectionate Sallies* of the Mi be *consistent* with *a total Absence* of *true Religion*, th are much more apparently *consistent* with *a very low tate* of it. I would desire to *lead you*, my Friend, *sublimer Notions* and *juster Marks*; and *refer you* to oth *Practical Writers*, and above all to *the Book of* GO to prove *how material* they are. I would therefore treat you, to bring *your own Heart* to *answer*, as the Presence of GOD, to such *Enquiries* as these.

§. 3. Do you find *Divine Love*, on the whole, *adva ing* in your Soul? Do you feel yourself *more and m sensible* of the *Presence of* GOD; and does *that Se* grow *more delightful to you*, than it formerly was? C you, even when *your natural Spirits* are *weak* and *lo* and you are *not in any Frame* for the *Ardors* and *Extas of Devotion*, nevertheless find *a pleasing Rest*, a ca *Repose of Heart*, in the Thought that GOD *is near* and that he *sees the secret Sentiments* of your Soul; wh you are, as it were, *labouring up the Hill*, and *cast a longing Eye* towards him, tho' you *cannot say* enjoy *any sensible Communications* from him? Is it *greeable to you* to *open your Heart* to his Inspection Regard, to *present it to him* laid bare of every Disgu and to *say* with *David*, *Thou*, *Lord*, *knowest thy S vant* (e)! Do you find *a growing Esteem* and *Approbat* of that *Sacred Law of* GOD, which is *the Transcript his Moral Perfections*? Do you inwardly *esteem all Precepts concerning all Things to be right* (f)? Do *discern*, not only *the Necessity*, but the *Reasonableness*, *Beauty*, the *Pleasure* of *Obedience*; and feel *a grou Scorn* and *Contempt* for *those Things*, which may be fered as *the Price of your Innocence*, and would te you to *sacrifice* or to *hazard your Interest* in the *Di*

(e) 2 Sam. vii. 20. (f) Psal. cxix. 128.

Favour and *Friendſhip?* Do you find *an ingenuous Deſire to pleaſe GOD*; not only, becauſe he is *ſo powerful*, and *has ſo many good* and *ſo many evil Things* entirely *at his Command*; but from *a Veneration* of his *moſt amiable Nature* and *Character?* And do you find *your Heart* habitually *reconciled* to *a moſt humble Subjection*, both to *his commanding*, and to *his diſpoſing Will?* Do you perceive, that *your own Will* is now *more ready* and *diſpoſed*, in every Circumſtance, to *bear the Yoke*, and to *ſubmit to the Divine Determination*, whatever he appoint *to be borne* or *forborne?* Can you *in Patience poſſeſs your Soul* (g)? Can you maintain *a more ſteady Calmneſs* and *Serenity*, when *GOD* is *ſtriking at your deareſt Enjoyments* in this World, and *acting* moſt directly *contrary* to your *preſent Intereſts*, to your *natural Paſſions* and *Deſires?* If you can, it is *a moſt certain* and *noble Sign*, that *Grace is grown up in you* to a very vigorous State.

§. 4. EXAMINE alſo, *what Affections* you find in your Heart *towards thoſe* who are *round about you*, and towards *the reſt of Mankind* in general. Do you find your Heart *overflow* with undiſſembled and unreſtrained *Benevolence?* Are you *more ſenſible* than you once were, of thoſe many *endearing Bonds*, which *unite all Men*, and eſpecially *all Chriſtians*, into *one Community*; which make them *Brethren* and *Fellow-Citizens?* Do all *the unfriendly Paſſions* die and *wither* in your Soul, while *the kind ſocial Affections* grow and *ſtrengthen?* And tho' *Self-love* was never *the reigning Paſſion*, ſince you became *a true Chriſtian*; yet as *ſome Remainders of it* are ſtill *too ready* to *work inwardly*, and to *ſhew themſelves*, eſpecially as ſudden Occaſions ariſe, do you perceive, that you *get ground of them?* Do you think of yourſelf *only* as *one of a great Number*, whoſe *particular Intereſts* and Concerns are *of little Importance* when compared with *thoſe of the Community*, and ought by all Means, on all Occaſions, to be *ſacrificed to them?*

§. 5. REFLECT eſpecially on *the Temper of your Mind towards thoſe*, whom *an unſanctified Heart* might be ready to imagine, it had *ſome juſt Excuſe* for *excepting out of the Liſt* of thoſe *it loves*, and towards whom you are ready to feel *a ſecret Averſion*, or at leaſt *an Alienation*.

(g) Luke xxi. 19.

tion from them. How does *your Mind ſtand affected* towa
thoſe, who *differ from you* in their *Religious Sentiments* a
Practices? I do not ſay, that *Chriſtian Charity* will
quire you, to *think every Error harmleſs.* It argues
Want of Love to a Friend in ſome Caſes, *to fear* left
Diſorder ſhould prove *more fatal* than he ſeems to im
gine; nay ſometimes, *the very Tenderneſs of Friend*
may *increaſe that Apprehenſion.* But *to hate Perſons*
cauſe *we think they are miſtaken*, and to *aggravate* ev
Difference in Judgment or *Practice* into *a fatal*
damnable Error that deſtroys all Chriſtian Communi
and Love, is *a Symptom* generally *much worſe* than
Evils it condemns. Do you *love the Image of Chriſt*
a Perſon, who thinks himſelf *obliged in Conſcience*
profeſs and *worſhip* in a Manner *different from yourſe*
Nay farther, can you *love* and *honour that* which
truly amiable and *excellent* in thoſe, *in whom much*
defective; in thoſe, *in whom* there is *a Mixture of*
gotry and *Narrowneſs of Spirit*, which may *lead th*
perhaps *to ſlight*, or even *to cenſure you?* Can you *l*
them, as the *Diſciples* and *Servants of Chriſt*, who th
a miſtaken Zeal may be ready to *caſt out your Name*
evil (h), and to *warn others againſt you* as a danger
Perſon? This is none of the leaſt *Triumphs of Char*
nor any deſpicable *Evidence* of *an Advance in Religio*

§. 6. AND, on this Head, reflect farther, how
you *bear Injuries?* There is *a certain Hardineſs of S*
in this Reſpect, which argues *a confirmed State* in *P*
and *Virtue.* Does every Thing of this Kind *hurry*
ruffle you, ſo as to *put you on Contrivances*, how
may *recompenſe*, or at leaſt, how you may *diſgrace*
expoſe him, who has *done you the Wrong?* Or can
ſtand the Shock calmly, and eaſily *divert your Mind*
other Objects, *only*, when you recollect theſe Things, *p*
ing and *praying for thoſe*, who *with the worſt Temp*
and Views are aſſaulting you? *This* is *a Chriſtlike Te*
per indeed; and He will *own it as ſuch*; will *own y*
as *one of his Soldiers*, as *one of his Heroes*; eſpecially
riſes ſo far, as inſtead of being *overcome of Evil*, to *ov*
come Evil with Good (i). Watch over *your Spirit*;
over *your Tongue*, when *Injuries are offered*; and

(h) Luke vi. 22. (i) Rom. xii. 21.

whether *you be ready* to *meditate upon them*, to *aggravate them to yourself*, to *complain of them to others*, and to *lay on all the Load of Blame* that you in Juſtice can; or whether *you be ready* to *put the kindeſt Conſtruction* upon the Offence, to *excuſe it* as far as Reaſon will allow, and where *after all* it will *wear a black and odious Aſpect*, to *forgive it*, heartily to forgive it, *and that* even *before any Submiſſion is made*, or *Pardon aſked*; and in Token of *the Sincerity of that Forgiveneſs*, to be *contriving what can be done*, by ſome Benefit or other toward the injurious Perſon, *to teach him a better Temper.*

§. 7. EXAMINE farther, with Regard to *the other Evils* and *Calamities of Life*, and even with Regard to *its Uncertainties*; how can you *bear them?* Do you find, *your Soul* is in this Reſpect *gathering Strength?* Have you *fewer foreboding Fears* and *diſquieting Alarms*, than you once had, *as to what may happen in Life?* Can you *truſt the Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs of* GOD, to *order your Affairs for you*, with *more Complacency* and *Chearfulneſs* than formerly? Do you find, you are *able to unite your Thoughts more* in ſurveying *preſent Circumſtances*, that you may collect *immediate Duty* from them, tho' you *know not* what GOD will *next appoint* or *call you to?* And when you *feel the Smart of Affliction*, do you make *a leſs Matter of it?* Can you *tranſfer your Heart* more eaſily *to Heavenly* and *Divine Objects*, without *an anxious Solicitude*, whether *this* or *that Burthen be removed*, ſo it may but *be ſanctified to promote* your *Communion with* GOD, and your *Ripeneſs for Glory?*

§. 8. EXAMINE alſo, whether you *advance in Humility*. This *a ſilent*, but *moſt excellent Grace*; and *they* who are *moſt eminent in it*, are *deareſt to* GOD, and *moſt fit for the Communications* of his Preſence to them. Do you then feel your Mind *more emptied* of *proud* and *haughty Imaginations?* Not prone ſo much *to look back* upon *paſt Services* which it has performed, as *forward* to *thoſe* which are *yet before you*, and *inward* upon *the remaining Imperfections* of your Heart? Do you *more orderly obſerve* your *daily Slips* and *Miſcarriages*, and find yourſelf diſpoſed to *mourn over thoſe Things before the Lord*, that once paſſed with you as *ſlight Matters*, tho' when you come to *ſurvey them*, as in the Preſence of GOD,

God, you find *they were not wholly involuntary*, o *free from Guilt?* Do you feel in your Breast *a deeper Ap prehension* of the *Infinite Majesty* of the *Blessed* GOD and of the *Glory* of his *Natural* and *Moral Perfections* so as, in Consequence of these Views, to *perceive your self* as it were *annihilated in his Presence*, and to *shrin* into *less than Nothing, and Vanity* (k)? If *this* be *you Temper*, God will *look upon you* with *peculiar Favour* and will *visit you more and more* with the distinguishe *Blessings of his Grace.*

§. 9. But there is *another* great *Branch* and Effec of *Christian Humility*, which it would be an unpardon able Negligence to omit. Let me therefore farther *en quire:* Are you more frequently *renewing your Applica tion*, your sincere, steady, determinate Application, *t the Righteousness* and *Blood* of Christ; as being sensibl how *unworthy* you are *to appear before* GOD, other wise than *in Him?* And do the *remaining Corruption* of your Heart *humble you before him*, tho' the *Disorder of your Life* are in a great measure *cured?* Are you *mor earnest* to obtain *the quickening Influences* of the Hol Spirit; and have you *such a Sense of your own Weak ness*, as to engage you to *depend*, in all the Duties yo perform, *upon the Communications of his Grace* to he *your Infirmities* (l)? Can you, *at the Close* of your mo religious, exemplary, and useful Days, *blush before* GO for the *Deficiencies* of them, while *others* perhaps ma be *ready to admire* and *extol your Conduct?* And whi you *give the Glory* of all that has been right *to Hi* from whom *the Strength* and *Grace* has been derived, a you coming *to the Blood of Sprinkling*, to free you fro *the Guilt* which mingles itself even with *the best of you Services?* Do you learn to receive *the Bounties of Pro* vidence, not only *with Thankfulness* as coming from Go but with a Mixture of *Shame* and *Confusion* too, und a Consciousness that you *do not deserve them*, and a continually *forfeiting them?* And do you *justify Pro dence* in *your Afflictions* and *Disappointments*, even whi *many are flourishing* around you *in the full Bloom of Pro perity*, whose *Offences* have been *more visible* at least, a *more notorious* than yours?

§. 10. D

(k) Isai. xl. 17. (l) Rom. viii. 26.

§. 10. Do you alſo *advance* in *Zeal* and *Activity*, for the *Service of* GOD, and the *Happineſs of Mankind?* Does *your Love* ſhew itſelf *ſolid* and *ſincere*, by a continual *Flow of good Works* from it? Can you view *the Sorrows of others* with *tender Compaſſion*, and with *Projects* and *Contrivances* what you may do *to relieve them?* Do you feel in your Breaſt, that you are more frequently *deviſing liberal Things* (m), and ready to *wave your own Advantage* or *Pleaſure* that you may accompliſh them? Do you find *your Imagination teeming* as it were *with Conceptions* and *Schemes*, for the *Advancement* of the *Cauſe* and *Intereſt of Chriſt* in the World, for the *Propagation of his Goſpel*, and for the *Happineſs of your Fellow-Creatures?* And do you not only *pray*, but *act for it*; act *in ſuch a Manner*, as to ſhew that you *pray in earneſt*; and feel *a Readineſs to do* what little *you can* in this Cauſe, even tho' *others*, who might if they pleaſed very conveniently do a vaſt Deal more, *will do nothing?*

§. 11. And, not to enlarge on this copious Head, *reflect* once more, *how your Affections ſtand*, with Regard to *this World*, and *another*. Are you more deeply and practically *convinced* of the *Vanity* of theſe *Things which are ſeen*, and *are Temporal* (n)? Do you perceive *your Expectations from them*, and *your Attachments to them*, to *diminiſh?* You are *willing to ſtay* in this World, *as long as your Father pleaſes*; and it is *right* and *well:* But do you find *your Bonds ſo looſened to it*, that you are *willing*, heartily willing, *to leave it at the ſhorteſt Warning*; ſo that if God ſhould ſee fit to *ſummon you away on a ſudden*, tho' it ſhould be in the Midſt of your Enjoyments, Purſuits, Expectations, and Hopes, you would *cordially conſent to that Remove*; without ſaying, "*Lord*, "let me ſtay *a little while longer*, to enjoy this or "that agreeable Entertainment, to finiſh this or that "Scheme?" Can you *think* with an habitual *Calmneſs* and hearty *Approbation*, if ſuch be the Divine Pleaſure, of *waking no more* when you lye down on your Bed, *of returning Home no more* when you go out of your Houſe? And yet, on the other hand, how *great* ſoever *the Burdens of Life* are, do you find *a Willingneſs to bear them*, in Submiſſion to the Will of your Heavenly Father, tho' it

(m) Iſai xxxii. 8. (n) 2 Cor. iv. 18.

it should be *to many future Years*; and tho' they should be *Years of far greater Affliction*, than you have ever yet seen? Can you *say calmly* and *steadily*, if not with such Overflowings of *tender Affections* as you could desire, "Behold, *thy Servant, thy Child*, is in Thine Hand, "*do with me as seemeth good in thy Sight* (o)! *My Will* "is *melted into Thine*; to be *here* or *there*, in *this* or "*that Circumstance*, just as Thou pleasest, and as shall *best* "*suit* with Thy *great extensive Plan*, which it is *impossible* "that *I*, or all *the Angels in Heaven*, should *mend*."

§. 12. THESE, if I understand Matters aright, are *some of the most substantial Evidences* of *Growth* and *Establishment in Religion*. Search after them; *Bless GOD for them*, so far as you discover them in yourself; and study to *advance in them daily*, under the Influences of *Divine Grace*, to which I heartily recommend you, and to which I intreat you frequently to *recommend yourself*.

The CHRISTIAN *breathing earnestly after Growth in Grace.*

"OH Thou ever blessed *Fountain* of *Natural* and "*Spiritual Life!* I thank Thee, that *I live* in "Religion. I bless Thee, that Thou hast *infused into* "*me* Thine own *vital Breath*, tho' I was once *dead in* "*Trespasses and Sins* (p), so that *I am become*, in a Sense "peculiar to Thine own Children, *a living Soul* (q). "But it is *mine earnest Desire*, that I may not only "*live*, but *grow*; *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge* "*of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (r), upon an Ac- "quaintance with whom *my Progress in it* so evidently "*depends!* In this View I humbly intreat Thee, that Thou "wilt *form my Mind* to *right Notions in Religion*, that "I may not *judge of Grace* by any *wrong Conception* "*of it*, nor *measure my Advances* in it *by those Things* "which are merely *the Effects of Nature*, and possibly "*its corrupt Effects!*

"May I be seeking after *an Increase* of *Divine Love* "to Thee, *my GOD and Father in Christ*, of *unreserved*

"*Re-*

(o) 2 Sam. xv. 26. (p) Eph. ii. 1.
(q) Gen. ii. 7. (r) 2 Pet. iii. 18.

" *Resignation to Thy* wise and holy *Will*, and of *extensive* " *Benevolence to my Fellow-Creatures!* May I *grow* in " *Patience* and *Fortitude of Soul*, in *Humility* and *Zeal*, " in *Spirituality* and *a Heavenly Disposition of Mind*, and " in *a Concern*, that *whether present or absent I may be* " *accepted of the Lord* (s), that *whether I live or die* it " may be *for His Glory!* In a Word, as thou knowest " *I hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, make me " whatever *Thou wouldst delight* to see me! *Draw in* " *my Soul*, by the gentle *Influences* of Thy gracious " SPIRIT, *every Trace* and *every Feature*, which *Thine* " *Eye*, Oh Heavenly Father, *may survey with Pleasure*, " and which Thou mayest acknowledge as *Thine own* " *Image!*

" I am sensible, Oh Lord, *I have not as yet attained:* " Yea, my Soul is utterly confounded to think, *how far* " I am *from being already perfect: But this one Thing*, " after the great Example of *Thine Apostle*, and the " much greater of *His Lord*, I would *endeavour to do*; " *forgetting the Things which are behind*, I would *press* " *forwards to those which are before* (t). Oh that " Thou wouldst *feed my Soul* by *Thy Word* and *Spi-* " *rit!* Having been, as I humbly hope and trust, *rege-* " *nerated* by it, *being born again, not of corruptible Seed,* " *but of incorruptible*, even *by Thy Word which liveth* " *and abideth for ever* (u), *as a new-born Babe I desire* " *the sincere Milk of the Word, that I may grow there-* " *by* (x). And may *my profiting appear unto all Men* (y), " till at length *I come unto a perfect Man, unto the Mea-* " *sure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ* (z); and " after having *enjoyed the Pleasures* of those that *flourish* " eminently *in Thy Courts below*, be fixed *in the Para-* " *dise above!* I ask, and *hope it* thro' Him, *of whose Ful-* " *ness we have all received, even Grace for Grace* (a): *To* " *Him be Glory, both now and for ever* (b)! Amen."

(s) 2 Cor. v. 9. (t) Phil. iii. 12, 13. (u) 1 Pet. i. 23.
(x) 1 Pet. ii. 2. (y) 1 Tim. iv. 15. (z) Eph. iv. 13.
(a) John i. 16. (b) 2 Pet. iii. 18.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

The advanced CHRISTIAN reminded of the Mercies of GOD, and exhorted to the Exercises of habitual Love to Him, and Joy in Him.

An holy Joy in GOD, our Privilege, as well as our Duty. §. 1. *The Christian invited to the Exercise of it;* §. 2. (1.) *By the Representation of Temporal Mercies.* §. 3. (2.) *By the Consideration of Spiritual Favours.* §. 4. (3.) *By the Views of Eternal Happiness.* §. 5. *And,* (4.) *Of the Mercies of GOD to others, the Living, and the Dead.* §. 6. *The Chapter closes with an Exhortation to this Heavenly Exercise,* §. 7. *and with an Example of the genuine Workings of this grateful Joy in GOD.*

§. 1. I WOULD now suppose my Reader to find, on an Examination of his Spiritual State, that he is *growing in Grace.* And if you desire, that *this Growth* may at once be *acknowledged* and *promoted*, let me call your Soul to *that more affectionate Exercise* of *Love to GOD* and *Joy in Him*, which *suits*, and *strengthens*, and *exalts the Character* of the *advanced Christian*; and which I beseech you to *regard*, not only *as your Privilege*, but *as your Duty* too. LOVE is the most sublime *generous Principle* of all true and acceptable *Obedience*; and *with Love*, when so wisely and happily fixed, when so certainly returned, JOY, *proportionable Joy*, must naturally be *connected.* It may justly *grieve a Man* that enters into *the Spirit of Christianity*, to see *how low* a *Life* the Generality even of *sincere Christians* commonly *live* in this *Respect.* *Rejoice* then *in the Lord, ye Righteous*

nus, and give Thanks at the Remembrance of his Holi-neſs (a), and of all thoſe *other Perfections* and *Glories*, which are included in that majeſtick, that wonderful, that delightful *Name*, THE LORD THY GOD! Spend not *your ſacred Moments* merely *in Confeſſion*, or *in Petition*, tho' each muſt have their daily Share: But give *a Part*, a conſiderable Part, *to the Celeſtial* and *Angelick Work* of *Praiſe*. Yea, labour to carry about with you continually *an Heart overflowing with ſuch Sentiments*, warmed and inflamed with *ſuch Affections*.

§. 2. ARE there not continually *Rays enough diffuſed* from the great *Father of Light and Love*, to *inkindle it* in our Boſom? Come, *my Chriſtian Friend and Brother*, come and *ſurvey* with me *the Goodneſs of our Heavenly Father*. And Oh that He would *give me ſuch a Senſe of it*, that I might *repreſent it* in a ſuitable Manner; that *while I am muſing, the Fire* may *burn* in my own Heart (b), and be *communicated* to yours! And Oh that it *might paſs* with the Lines I write, *from Soul to Soul*; awakening in the Breaſt of *every Chriſtian* that reads them, *Sentiments more worthy* of the *Children of GOD*, and the *Heirs of Glory*; who are to *ſpend an Eternity* in *thoſe ſacred Exerciſes*, to which I am now endeavouring to excite you!

§. 3 HAVE you not Reaſon to *adopt the Words* of *David*, and ſay, *How many are Thy gracious Thoughts to me, Oh Lord! How great is the Sum of them! When I would count them, they are more in Number than the Sand* (c). You indeed know, *where to begin the Survey*; for the Favours of GOD to you *begun with your Being*. Commemorate it therefore with a grateful Heart, that *the Eyes*, which *ſaw your Subſtance, being yet imperfect*, beheld you with a friendly Care, *when you were made in Secret*, and have watched over you ever ſince; and that *the Hand*, which *drew the Plan of your Members, when as yet there was none of them* (d), not only *faſhioned them* at firſt, but from that Time has been concerned in *keeping all your Bones*, ſo that *not one of them is broken* (e); and to it indeed, it is *to this you owe it*, that *you live*. Look back upon *the Path you have trod*, from the Day that

(a) Pſal. xcvii. 12. (b) Pſal. xxxix. 3. (c) Pſal. cxxxix. 17, 18. (d) Pſal. cxxxix. 15, 16. (e) Pſal. xxxiv. 20.

GOD *brought you out of the Womb*, and ſay, whether y
do not as it were *ſee all the Road* thick ſet with *the Ma*
and *Memorials* of the *Divine Goodneſs*. Recollect
Places where you have lived, *and the Perſons* with wh
you have moſt intimately converſed; and call to mind
Mercies you have received *in thoſe Places*, and *from t*
Perſons, as the *Inſtruments* of the *Divine Care* and G
neſs. Recollect *the Difficulties* and *Dangers*, with wh
you have been ſurrounded; and reflect attentively
what *GOD hath done* to *defend you from them*, or to *ca*
you through them. Think, *how often* there has been
a Step between you and Death; and *how ſuddenly* G
hath ſometimes *interpoſed* to *ſet you in Safety*, even bef
you apprehended your Danger. Think of *thoſe Cha*
bers of Illneſs, in which you have been *confined*, and fr
whence perhaps you once thought *you ſhould go forth*
more; but *ſaid* (with *Hezekiah*) *in the cutting off of y*
Days, I ſhall go to the Gates of the Grave, I am depri
of the Reſidue of my Years (f). GOD has, it may b
ſince that Time, *added many Years* to your Life; a
you know not *how many* may be *in Reſerve*,
how much Uſefulneſs and *Happineſs* may attend ea
Survey *your Circumſtances in Relative Life*; how ma
kind Friends are ſurrounding you daily, and ſtudyi
how they may contribute to your Comfort. Reflect
thoſe remarkable Circumſtances in Providence, which
caſioned the knitting of *ſome Bonds of this Kind*, whi
next to thoſe which join your Soul to GOD, *you num*
among the happieſt. And forget not, *in how many Inſtanc*
when theſe *dear Lives* have been *threatned*, Lives perha
more ſenſibly dear than your own, *GOD hath given th*
back from the Borders of the Grave, and ſo *added n*
Endearments ariſing from that tender Circumſtance *to*
your After-Converſe with them. Nor forget, in ho
gracious a Manner He hath *ſupported ſome others in th*
laſt Moments, and enabled them to *leave behind a ſw*
Odour of Piety, which hath embalmed their Memori
revived you when ready to faint under the Sorrows
the firſt Separation, and, on the whole, made even t
Recollection of their Death delightful.

§. 4. B

(f) Iſai. xxxviii. 10.

§. 4. But it is more than Time, that I lead on your Thoughts to *the many Spiritual Mercies* which God hath bestowed upon you. *Look back*, as it were, *to the Rock from whence you were hewn, and to the Hole of the Pit from whence you were digged* (g). Reflect seriously on the *State*, wherein *Divine Grace found you*: Under *how much Guilt*; under *how much Pollution!* In what *Danger*; in what *Ruin!* Think *what was*, and Oh think with yet deeper Reflection, *what would have been* the Case, if the *Eye of GOD*, which penetrates into Eternity, *saw what your Mind*, amused with the Trifles of present Time and sensual Gratification, *was utterly ignorant and regardless of*. It saw you *on the Borders of Eternity*, and *viewed you*; saw, that you would in a little Time have been *such a helpless, wretched Creature*, as *the Sinner* that *just now dead*, and has to his infinite Surprize and everlasting Terror *met his unexpected Doom*, and would like him *stand thunder-struck* in Astonishment and Despair. This *GOD saw*, and He *pitied you*; and being *merciful* to you, He *provided* in the Counsels of his eternal Love and Grace *a Redeemer for you*, and *purchased you* to himself *with the Blood of his Son: A Price*, which if you will pause upon it, and think seriously what it was, must surely *affect you to such a Degree*, as to make you *fall down before GOD* in *Wonder* and *Shame*, to think that it should *ever* have been *given for you*. To accomplish these blessed Purposes, He *sent his Grace into your Heart*; that tho' *you were once Darkness*, you are *now Light in the Lord* (h). He made *that happy Change* which you *now feel* in your Soul, and *by his Holy Spirit which is given to you* He *shed abroad* that Principle of *Love* (i), which is *inkindled* by this Review, and *now flames* with greater Ardor than before. *Thus far* He hath *supported* you in your Christian Course; and *having obtained Help from him* it is, that *you continue* even *to this Day* (k). He hath not only *blessed you*, but *made you a Blessing* (l): and tho' you have not been *so useful*, as that holy *Generosity of Heart*, which he has excited, would have *enabled you to desire*, yet *some Good you have done* in the Station in which he has fixed you. *Some* of your Bre-

(g) Isai. li. 1. (h) Eph. v. 8. (i) Rom. v. 5.
(k) Acts xxvi. 22. (l) Gen. xii. 2.

thren of Mankind *have been relieved*, perhaps too *ſu*
thoughtleſs Creature reclaimed to Virtue and Happine
by his Bleſſing on your Endeavours. Some *in the Way*
Heaven, are *praiſing GOD for you*; and ſome perha
already there, are *longing for your Arrival*, that they ma
thank you in nobler and more expreſſive Forms *for Be*
fits, the Importance of which they now ſufficiently u
derſtand, tho' while here they could never conceive it

§. 5. CHRISTIAN, look round on *the number*
Bleſſings of one Kind and of another, with which y
are *already encompaſſed*; and advance your Proſpect *f*
farther, to what *Faith* yet diſcovers *within the Ve*
Think of thoſe *now unknown Tranſports*, with whi
thou ſhalt *drop every Burthen* in the Grave, and *th*
immortal Spirit ſhall *mount*, light and joyful, holy a
happy, *to GOD*, its Original, its Support, and its Hop
to GOD, the Source of Being, of Holineſs, and of Pl
ſure; *to* JESUS, thro' whom all theſe Mercies are der
ed to thee, and who will *appoint thee a Throne near*
own, to be for ever *the Spectator* and *Partaker* of
Glory. Think of *the Rapture*, with which thou ſh
attend his Triumph in the *Reſurrection Day*, and *rece*
this poor mouldering *corruptible Body tranſformed into*
glorious Image; and then think, "*Theſe Hopes* are
"*mine alone*, but the Hopes *of Thouſands* and *Milli*
"*Multitudes*, whom I number among *the deareſt of*
"*Friends* upon Earth, are *rejoicing with me* in t
"Apprehenſions and Views: And *GOD gives me* ſo
"times *to ſee* the Smiles on their Cheeks, *the ſo*
"*humble Hope* that ſparkles in their Eyes, and ſh
"thro' the Tears of tender Gratitude; and *to hear*
"little of *their inward Complacency* and *Joy*, w
"Language can expreſs. Yea, and *Multitudes*
"who were *once equally dear to me* with theſe, th
"have *laid them in the Grave*, and *wept over*
"*Duſt*, are *living to GOD*, *living* in the Poſſeſſion
"*inconceivable Delights*, and *drinking* large Dra
"of *the Water of Life*, which flows in perpetual Str
"*at his Right Hand*."

§. 6. OH *Chriſtian*, thou art ſtill *intimately* u
and *allied* to them. *Death* cannot *break a Friend*
thus cemented, and it ought not to *render thee* inſe

of the *Happineſs* of *thoſe Friends*, for whoſe Memory thou retaineſt ſo juſt an Honour. They *live to GOD*, as his Servants; they *ſerve him, and ſee his Face* (m); and they make *but a ſmall Part* of that *glorious Aſſembly*. Millions, *equally worthy* of thine Eſteem and Affection *with themſelves, inhabit thoſe bliſsful Regions*: And wilt thou not *rejoice in their Joy?* and wilt thou not *adore that everlaſting Spring* of Holineſs and Happineſs, from whence *each of theſe Streams* is derived? Yea, I will add, while *the bleſſed Angels* are ſo kindly *regarding us*, while they are *miniſtring to thee*, Oh *Chriſtian*, and bearing thee in their Arms, *as an Heir of Salvation* (n), wilt thou not *rejoice in their Felicity* too? and wilt thou not *adore that GOD*, who gives them *all the ſuperior Glory* of their more exalted Nature, and gives them *a Heaven*, which fills them with Bleſſedneſs, even while they ſeem to *withdraw from it*, that they may *attend on Thee?*

§. 7. THIS, and infinitely *more than this*, the Bleſſed *GOD* is, and was, and ſhall ever be. *Their Felicities*, Oh Chriſtian, and *thine*, are *immortal*. Theſe *Heavenly Luminaries* ſhall *glow* with an *undecaying Flame*; and *thou* ſhalt *ſhine* and *burn among them*, when the Sun and the Stars are gone out. *The Bounties of GOD* to his obedient Creatures, and *their Happineſs in him*, ſhall be *everlaſting*, ſhall be *ever growing*. Bow down, Oh thou *Child of GOD*, thou *Heir of Glory*, bow down, and let *all that is within thee* unite in one Act of *grateful Love*; and let *all that is around thee*, all that is *before thee* in the Proſpects of an unbounded Eternity, conſpire to *elevate* and *tranſport thy Soul*; that thou mayſt, as far as poſſible, *begin the Work* and *Bleſſedneſs* of *Heaven*, in falling down *before the GOD of it*, in opening thine Heart to *his gracious Influences*, and in breathing out before him *that Incenſe of Praiſe*, which theſe *warm Beams* of his *Preſence* and *Love* have *ſo great a Tendency to produce*, and to *ennoble with a Fragrancy* reſembling that of his Paradiſe above.

(m) Rev. xxii. 3, 4. (n) Heb. i. 14.

The grateful Soul rejoicing in the Bleſſings of Providence and Grace, and pouring out itſelf before GOD *in vigorous and affectionate Exerciſes of Love and Praiſe.*

" OH MY GOD, *it is enough!* I have *muſed*, and " *the Fire burneth* (o)! But Oh, in what Language " ſhall *the Flame break forth!* What *can I ſay* but *this*, " that *my Heart admires Thee*, and *adores Thee*, and " *loves Thee!* My *little Veſſel* is *as full as it can hold*; " and I would *pour out all that Fulneſs before Thee*, that " it may grow *capable of receiving more and more.* Thou " art *my Hope*, and *my Help*; *my Glory*, *and the Lifter* " *up of my Head* (p). *My Heart rejoices in Thy Salvation* (q); and when I *ſet myſelf* under the Influences of " Thy good Spirit *to converſe with Thee*, a Thouſand " *delightful Thoughts* ſpring up *at once*; a Thouſand " *Sources of Pleaſure* are *unſealed*, and *flow in* upon " my Soul *with ſuch Refreſhment* and *Joy*, that they " *ſeem to croud* into every Moment *the Happineſs* of *Days*, " and *Weeks*, and *Months*.

" I bleſs Thee, *Oh GOD*, for *this Soul of mine*, " which Thou haſt *created*; which Thou haſt *taught to* " *ſay*, and I hope to the happieſt Purpoſe, *Where is GOD* " *my Maker* (r)? I bleſs Thee for *the Knowledge*, with " which Thou haſt *adorned it*. I bleſs Thee for *that* " *Grace*, with which, I truſt *I may* (not without humble " Wonder) *ſay*, Thou haſt *ſanctified it*; tho' alas, *the* " *Celeſtial Plant* is fixed in *too barren a Soil*, and *does* " *not flouriſh* to the Degree I could wiſh.

" I bleſs Thee alſo for *that Body* which Thou haſt *given* " *me*, and which Thou *preſerveſt* as yet *in its Strength* " and *Vigour*; not only *capable of reliſhing the Entertainments* which Thou provideſt *for its various Senſes*, " but (which I eſteem *far more valuable* than any of " them for its own Sake,) *capable of acting* with ſome " Vivacity *in Thy Service*. I bleſs Thee for *that Eaſe* " and *Freedom*, with which *theſe Limbs of mine move* " *themſelves*, and *obey the Dictates of my Spirit*, I hope " *as guided by Thine*. I bleſs Thee, that *the Keeper*

(o) Pſal. xxxix. 3. (p) Pſal. iii. 3. (q) Pſal. xiii. 5.
(r) Job xxxv. 10.

" *of the Houſe do not* yet *tremble*, nor *the Strong Men* " *bow themſelves*; that *they that look out of the Windows* " *are not* yet *darkned*, nor *the Daughters of Muſick* " *brought low:* I bleſs Thee, *Oh GOD of my Life*, " that *the Silver Cords are not* yet *looſed*, nor *the Golden* " *Bowl broken* (s): For it is *Thine Hand* that *braces all* " *my Nerves*, and *Thine Infinite Skill* that *prepares thoſe* " *Spirits*, which *flow in ſo freely*, and when exhauſted *re-* " *cruit ſo ſoon* and ſo plentifully.

" I praiſe Thee for *that Royal Bounty*, with which " Thou provideſt *for the daily Support of Mankind* in " general, and *for mine* in particular; for *the various* " *Table* which Thou *ſpreadeſt before me*, and for *the* " *overflowing Cup* which Thou *putteſt into my Hands* (t). " I bleſs Thee, that *theſe Bounties of Thy Providence* " do not ſerve, as it were, to *upbraid a diſabled Appe-* " *tite*, and are not *like Meſſes of Meat ſet before the Dead*. " I bleſs Thee too, that *I eat not my Morſel alone* (u), " but *ſhare it with ſo many agreeable Friends*, who add " *the Reliſh of the Social Life* to *that of the Animal* at " our Seaſons of common Repaſt. I thank Thee for " *ſo many dear Relatives at Home*, for *ſo many kind* " *Friends Abroad*, who are *capable of ſerving me* in va- " rious Inſtances, and *diſpoſed to make an obliging Uſe* of " that Capacity.

" Nor would I forget to acknowledge Thy Favour, " *in rendring me capable of ſerving others*, and *giving* " *me* in any Inſtances *to know*, how much *more bleſſed* " *it is to give, than to receive* (x). I thank Thee for " *a Heart* which *feels the Sorrows of the Neceſſitous*, " and *a Mind* which can *make it my early Care* and " *Refreſhment* to *contrive*, according to my little Abi- " lity, *for their Relief:* For *this alſo cometh forth from* " *Thee, Oh Lord* (y), the great *Author* of every *bene-* " *volent Inclination*, of every *prudent Scheme*, of every " *ſucceſsful Attempt* to *ſpread Happineſs around us*, or " in any Inſtance to *leſſen Diſtreſs*.

" And ſurely, *Oh Lord*, if I thus acknowledge *the* " *Pleaſures* of *Sympathy with the Afflicted*, much more " muſt I bleſs Thee for *thoſe* of *Sympathy with the Happy*,

" with

(s) Eccl. xii. 3, 4, 6. (t) Pſal. xxiii. 5. (u) Job xxxi. 17.
(x) Acts xx. 35. (y) Iſai. xxviii. 29.

" with thoſe that are *compleatly Bleſſed*. I adore Thee
" for *the Streams* that *water Paradiſe*, and *maintain*
" *it in ever-flouriſhing, ever-growing Delight*. I praiſe
" Thee for *the Reſt, the Joy, the Tranſport*, Thou art
" *giving to many* that were *once dear to me* on Earth;
" *whoſe Sorrows* it was *my Labour to ſooth*, and *whoſe*
" *Joys*, eſpecially *in Thee*, it was *the Delight of my*
" *Heart to promote*. I praiſe Thee for *the Bleſſedneſs* of
" *every Saint*, and of *every Angel*, that *ſurrounds Thy*
" *Throne above*; and I praiſe Thee, with Accents of
" diſtinguiſhed Pleaſure, for *that reviving Hope* which
" Thou haſt *implanted in my Boſom*, that I ſhall *'ere long*
" *know* by *clear Sight*, and by *everlaſting Experience*,
" what *that Felicity of theirs* is, which I now *only diſ-*
" *cover at a Diſtance*, thro' the comparatively obſcure
" *Glaſs of Faith*. Even now, thro' Thy Grace, do I *feel*
" *myſelf borne forward* by Thy ſupporting Arm *to thoſe*
" *Regions of Bleſſedneſs*. Even now am I *waiting for*
" *Thy Salvation* (z), with that *ardent Deſire* on the
" one hand, which its ſublime Greatneſs cannot but
" inſpire into the believing Soul, and that *calm Reſig-*
" *nation* on the other, which the Immutability of Thy
" Promiſe eſtabliſhes.

" And now, *Oh my GOD, What ſhall I ſay* unto
" Thee? *What*, but that *I love Thee* above all the
" Powers of Language to expreſs! While I thus *feel*
" *Thy Sacred Spirit breathing on my Heart*, and exciting
" *theſe Fervours of Love* to Thee, *I cannot doubt it* any
" more, than I can *doubt the Reality* of this *Animal Life*,
" while I exert the Actings of it, and feel its Senſa-
" tions. Surely, if ever I knew *the Appetite of Hunger*,
" my Soul *hungers after Righteouſneſs* (a), and longs for
" *a greater Conformity* to Thy Bleſſed Nature and Holy
" Will. If ever *my Palate felt Thirſt*, *my Soul thirſteth*
" *for GOD, even for the living GOD* (b), and *pantith*
" for the more abundant Communication of *His Favour*.
" If ever *this Body*, when *wearied with Labours* or
" *Journies*, knew what it was to *wiſh for the Refreſh-*
" *ment of my Bed* and rejoiced to reſt there, *my Soul*
" with ſweet Acquieſcence *reſts upon Thy gracious Boſom*,
" Oh my Heavenly Father, and *returns to its Repoſe* in
" the

(z) Gen. xlix. 18. (a) Mat. v. 6. (b) Pſal. xlii. 2.

" the Embraces of its *GOD*, who *hath dealt ſo bounti-*
" *fully with it* (c). And if ever I *ſaw the Face of a*
" *beloved Friend* with *Complacency* and *Joy*, I *rejoice in*
" *beholding Thy Face*, Oh Lord, and in calling Thee *my*
" *Father in Chriſt*. Such Thou art, and ſuch Thou wilt
" be, *for Time*, and *for Eternity*. What have I *more*
" *to do*, but to *commit myſelf to Thee* for both? leaving
" it to Thee to *chuſe mine Inheritance*, and to order my
" Affairs *for me* (d), while all my Buſineſs is *to ſerve*
" *Thee*, and all my Delight *to praiſe Thee*. *My Soul follows*
" *hard after GOD*, becauſe *His Right Hand upholds*
" *me* (e). Let it ſtill *bear me up*, and I ſhall *preſs on*
" *towards Thee*, till *all my Deſires* be *accompliſhed* in
" the *Eternal Enjoyment of Thee!* Amen."

(c) Pſal. cxvi. 7. (d) Pſal. xlvii. 4. (e) Pſal. lxiii. 8.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

The Eſtabliſhed CHRISTIAN urged to exert himſelf for Purpoſes of Uſefulneſs.

A ſincere Love to GOD will expreſs itſelf, not only in Devotion, but in Benevolence to Men. §. 1, 2. *This is the Command of GOD.* §. 3. *The true Chriſtian feels his Soul wrought to a Holy Conformity to it;* §. 4. *and therefore will deſire Inſtruction on this Head.* §. 5. *Accordingly Directions are given for the Improvement of various Talents: Particularly,* (1.) *Genius and Learning.* §. 6. (2.) *Power.* §. 7. (3.) *Domeſtick Authority.* §. 8. (4.) *Eſteem.* §. 9. (5.) *Riches.* §. 10. *Several good Ways of employing them hinted at.* §. 11. *Prudence in Expence urged, for the Support of Charity.* §. 12, 13. *Divine Direction in this Reſpect to be ſought.* §. 14. *The Chriſtian breathing after more extenſive Uſefulneſs.*

§. 1. SUCH as I have deſcribed in the *former Chapter*, I truſt, are and will be *the frequent Exerciſes* of your Soul before GOD. Thus will *your Love* and *Gratitude breathe itſelf forth* in the Divine Preſence, and will, *thro' Jeſus* the great Mediator, *come up* before it *as Incenſe*, and yield *an acceptable Savour*. But then you muſt remember, *this* will not be *the only Effect* of that *Love to GOD*, which I have ſuppoſed ſo warm in your Heart. If it be *ſincere*, it will not ſpend itſelf in *Words alone*; but will diſcover itſelf in *Actions*, and will *produce*, as its genuine Fruit, *an unfeigned Love to your Fellow-Creatures*, and *an unwearied Deſire* and *Labour to do them Good* continually.

§. 2. "HAS

§. 2. "HAS the great *Father of Mercies*," will you ſay, "*looked upon me* with ſo gracious an Eye; has He "not only *forgiven me Ten Thouſand Offences*, but *in-*"*riched me* with ſuch a *Variety of Benefits*; Oh *what* "*ſhall I render to him for them all!* Inſtruct me, Oh ye "*Oracles of Eternal Truth!* Inſtruct me, ye *elder Bre-*"*thren* in the Family of *my Heavenly Father!* Inſtruct "me above all, Oh thou *Spirit of Wiſdom* and *of Love*, "what I may be able to do, *to expreſs my Love* to the "great *Eternal Fountain of Love*, and to *approve my* "*Fidelity* to Him, who has already *done ſo much to en-*"*gage it*, and who will *take ſo much Pleaſure* in *own-*"*ing* and *rewarding it!*"

§. 3. THIS, Oh Chriſtian, *is the Command which we have heard from the Beginning*, and it will ever continue in unimpaired Force, *that he who loveth GOD*, ſhould *love his Brother alſo* (a); and ſhould *expreſs that Love, not in Word* and *in Profeſſion alone, but in Deed and in Truth* (b). You are to *love your Neighbour as yourſelf*; to love *the whole Creation of GOD*; and, ſo far as your Influence can extend, muſt *endeavour to make it happy*.

§. 4. "YES," will you ſay, "and I *do love it*. I "feel *the golden Chain* of the *Divine Love* incircling us "all, and binding us cloſe to each other, *joining us in* "*one Body*, and *diffuſing* as it were *one Soul thro' all*. "May *Happineſs*, true and ſublime, perpetual and ever-"growing Happineſs, *reign thro' the whole World* of "GOD's *rational and obedient Creatures* in Heaven and "on Earth! And may *every revolted Creature*, that is *ca-*"*pable* of being recovered and reſtored, *be made obedient!* "Yea, may *the neceſſary Puniſhment* of *thoſe*, who are "*irrecoverable*, be *over-ruled* by Infinite Wiſdom and "Love *to the Good of the whole!*"

§. 5. THESE are *right Sentiments*; and if they are indeed *the Sentiments of your Heart*, Oh Reader, and not an empty Form of vain Words, they *will be attended* with *a ſerious Concern* to *act in Subordination* to this great Scheme of *Divine Providence*, according to your Abilities in their utmoſt Extent. And to this Purpoſe, they *will put you* on *ſurveying the peculiar Circumſtances* of

(a) 1 John iv. 21. (b) 1 John iii. 18.

of your Life and Being; that you may *diſcover* what *Opportunities of Uſefulneſs* they *now afford*, and how *thoſe Opportunities* and *Capacities* may be *improved*. Enter therefore into *ſuch a Survey*; not that you may *pride yourſelves* in the *Diſtinctions* of *Divine Providence* or *Grace* towards you, or *having received*, may *glory as if you had not received* (c); but that you may *deal faithfully* with the great *Proprietor*, whoſe *Steward* you are, and by whom you are *intruſted* with every *Talent*, which, with Reſpect to any Claim from your Fellow-Creatures, you may call *your own*. And here, *having Gifts differing according to the Grace which is given unto us* (d), let us *hold the Balance* with an *impartial Hand*, that ſo we may *determine* what it is that *GOD requires of us*; which is nothing leſs, than *doing the moſt* we can invent, contrive, and effect, *for the general Good*. But Oh, how ſeldom is *this Eſtimate* faithfully made! And how much does *the World around us*, and how much do *our own Souls* ſuffer, for Want of that Fidelity!

§. 6. HATH GOD given you *Genius* and *Learning*? It was *not*, that you might *amuſe* or *deck yourſelf* with it, and *kindle a Blaze* which ſhould only ſerve to *attract* and *dazzle* the Eyes of Men. It was *intended*, to be the Means of *leading* both *yourſelf* and *them* to the *Father of Lights*. And it will be *your Duty*, according to the peculiar Turn of *that Genius* and *Capacity*, either to endeavour to *improve* and *adorn Human Life*, or, by a more direct Application of it to Divine Subjects, to *plead the Cauſe of Religion*, to defend *its Truths*, to enforce and recommend *its Practice*, to *deter Men from Courſes* which would be *diſhonourable to GOD* and *fatal to themſelves*, and to *try the utmoſt Efforts* of all the Solemnity and Tenderneſs with which you can clothe your Addreſſes, to *lead them* into the Paths of *Virtue* and *Happineſs*.

§. 7. HAS GOD inveſted you with *Power*, whether it be in *a larger* or *ſmaller Society*? Remember, that *this Power* was *given you*, that *GOD* might be *honoured* and *thoſe* placed *under your Government*, whether *Domeſtick* or *Publick*, might be made *happy*. Be concerned therefore, that whether you be *intruſted* with *the Rod*, or

(c) 1 Cor. iv. 7. (d) Rom. xii. 6.

the Sword, it may *not be borne in vain* (e). Are you *a Magiſtrate?* Have you *any Share* in the great and tremendous Charge of *enacting Laws?* Reverence *the Authority* of the *ſupream Legiſlator*, the great *Guardian of Society:* Promote *none*, conſent to *none*, which you *do not* in your own Conſcience *eſteem*, in preſent Circumſtances, *an Intimation of his Will*; and in the Eſtabliſhment of which you do not firmly believe you ſhall be *his Miniſter for Good* (f). Have you the Charge of *executing Laws?* Put Life into them by *a vigorous* and *ſtrenuous Execution*, according to the Nature of the *particular Office* you bear. Retain not *an empty Name of Authority*. Permit not yourſelf, as it were, to *fall aſleep on the Tribunal*. Be *active*, be *wakeful*, be *obſervant* of what paſſeth around you. *Protect the Upright*, and *the Innocent*. *Break in Pieces* the Power of *the Oppreſſor*. Unveil every diſhoneſt Art. *Diſgrace*, as well as *defeat the Wretch*, that makes his diſtinguiſhed Abilities *the Diſguiſe* or *Protection* of *the Wickedneſs*, which he ought rather to endeavour to *expoſe*, and to *drive out of the World* with Abhorrence.

§. 8. Are you placed only *at the Head* of a *private Family?* Rule it *for GOD*. Adminiſter the Concerns of *that little Kingdom* with the *ſame Views*, and on the *ſame Principles*, which I have been inculcating on *the Powerful* and *the Great*; if by an unexpected Accident *any of them* ſhould ſuffer their Eye to *glance* upon the Preſſage above. *Your Children* and *Servants* are your *natural Subjects*. Let *good Order* be eſtabliſhed among them, and keep them under *a regular Diſcipline*. Let them be *inſtructed in the Principles of Religion*, that they may know *how reaſonable* ſuch a Diſcipline is; and let them be accuſtomed to *act accordingly*. You cannot indeed *change their Hearts*, but you may very much *influence their Conduct*; and by that Means may *preſerve them from many Snares*, may do a great Deal to *make them uſeful Members of Society*, and may *ſet them* as it were *in the Way of GOD's Steps* (g), if peradventure *paſſing by* he may *bleſs them* with the Riches of his Grace. And fail not to do your utmoſt to *convince them of their Need of thoſe Bleſſings*; labour to promote *their Eſteem of them*,

(e) Rom. xiii. 4. (f) *Ibid.* (g) Pſal. lxxxv. 13.

them, and *their earneſt Deſire after them*, as incomparably *more valuable* than any Thing elſe.

§. 9. AGAIN, Has GOD been pleaſed to raiſe you to *Eſteem* among your Fellow-Creatures, which is *not always* in Proportion to *a Man's Rank* or *Poſſeſſions* in Human Life? Are *your Counſels heard* with Attention? Is *your Company ſought?* Does GOD give you *good Acceptance in the Eyes of Men*, ſo that they do not only *put the faireſt Conſtruction on your Words*, but *overlook Faults* of which you are conſcious to yourſelf, and *conſider your Actions* and *Performances* in the *moſt indulgent* and *favourable Light?* You ought to *regard this*, not only as *a Favour of Providence*, and as *an Encouragement* to you chearfully *to purſue your Duty*, in the ſeveral Branches of it, for the Time to come; but alſo, as *giving you much greater Opportunities of Uſefulneſs*, than in your preſent Station you could *otherwiſe* have had. If *your Character* has *any Weight* in the World, *throw it into the right Scale*. Endeavour to *keep Virtue* and *Goodneſs in Countenance*. Affectionately *give your Hand* to *modeſt Worth*, where it ſeems to be *depreſſed* or *overlooked*; tho' *ſhining*, when viewed in its proper Light, *with a Luſtre* which you may think *much ſuperior* to your own. Be *an Advocate for Truth*; be *a Counſellor of Peace*; be *an Example of Candour*; and do all you can to *reconcile the Hearts of Men*, and eſpecially *of Good Men*, to each other, however they may *differ in their Opinions* about Matters which it is poſſible for Good Men to diſpute. And let *the Caution* and *Humility of your Behaviour*, in Circumſtances of ſuch *ſuperior Eminence*, and amidſt ſo many Tokens of *general Eſteem*, ſilently *reprove the Raſhneſs* and *Haughtineſs* of *thoſe*, who perhaps are *remarkable for little elſe*; or who, if *their Abilities* were indeed *conſiderable*, muſt be *deſpiſed*, and whoſe *Talents* muſt be in a great Meaſure *loſt to the Publick*, till *that Raſhneſs* and *Haughtineſs of Spirit* be *ſubdued*. Nor ſuffer yourſelf to be *interrupted* in this generous and worthy Courſe by *the little Attacks* of *Envy* and *Calumny*, which you may meet with in it. Be ſtill *attentive to the general Good*, and *ſteadily reſolute* in your Efforts *to promote it*; and leave it to *Providence*, to *guard* or to *reſcue your Character* from *the baſe Aſſaults* of *Malice* and *Falſ-*

hood

hood; which will often, without your Labour, *confute themſelves*, and heap upon the Authors *greater Shame*, or (if they are inacceſſible to that,) *greater Infamy*, than your Humanity will allow you to wiſh them.

§. 10. ONCE more, Has GOD bleſt you with *Riches?* Has he placed you *in ſuch Circumſtances*, that you have *more than you abſolutely need* for the Subſiſtence of yourſelf and your Family? Remember *your approaching Account*. Remember *what an Incumbrance* theſe Things often prove to Men *in the Way of their Salvation*, and how often, according to *our Lord's* expreſs Declaration, they render it *as difficult to enter into the Kingdom of GOD, as it is for a Camel to go thro' the Eye of a Needle* (h). Let it therefore be *your immediate*, your *earneſt*, and your *daily Prayer*, that *Riches* may not be *a Snare* and *a Shame to you*, as they are to *by far the greater Part* of their Poſſeſſors. *Appropriate*, I beſeech you, *ſome certain Part* and *Proportion* of your Eſtate and Revenues, *to charitable Uſes*; with a proviſional Increaſe, *as GOD ſhall proſper you* in any extraordinary Inſtance. *By this Means* you will always have *a Fund of Charity* at hand: And you will probably be *more ready to communicate*, when you *look upon what is ſo depoſited*, as *not* in any Senſe *your own*; but as *already* actually *given away* to thoſe Uſes, tho' *not yet affixed* to particular Objects. It is not for me to ſay, *what that Proportion ought to be*. To *thoſe* who have *large Revenues*, and *no Children*, perhaps *a Third* or *one Half* may be *too little*: To *thoſe* whoſe *Incomes* are *ſmall*, and their *Charge conſiderable*, tho' they have *ſomething more* than is *abſolutely neceſſary*, it is poſſible *a Tenth* may be *too much*. But *pray*, that GOD would *guide your Mind*; *make a Trial for one Year*, on ſuch Terms, as in your Conſcience you think will be moſt pleaſing to Him; and let *your Obſervations in that*, teach you to fix *your Proportion for the next*; always remembring, that *He requires Juſtice* in the firſt Place, and *Alms-deeds* only ſo far as may *conſiſt with that*.

§. 11. AND that *your Heart* may be yet *more opened*, and that *your Charity* may be *directed to the beſt Purpoſes*, let me briefly mention *a Variety of good Uſes*, which may call for *the Conſideration of thoſe*, whom GOD

(h) Mat. xix. 24.

has in this Reſpect *diſtinguiſhed* by an *Ability to do good*. To aſſiſt the Hints I am to offer, *look round on the Neighbourhood* in which you live. Think *how many honeſt* and *induſtrious*, perhaps too I might add *religious People*, are making *very hard Shifts* to ſtruggle thro' Life. Think what a Comfort *that would be to them*, which you might, without any Inconvenience, *ſpare from that Abundance* which GOD hath given you.——Hearken alſo to *any extraordinary Calls of Charity* which may happen, eſpecially *thoſe of a publick Nature*; and help them forward with *your Example*, and *your Intereſt*, which perhaps may be *of much greater Importance* than *the Sum* which *you contribute*, conſidered in itſelf. Have *a Tongue to plead for the Neceſſitous*, as well as *a Hand to relieve them*; and endeavour to *diſcountenance thoſe poor ſhameful Excuſes*, which *Covetouſneſs* often dictates to thoſe, whoſe Art may indeed *ſet ſome Varniſh* on what they ſuggeſt, but *ſo ſlight a one*, that *the coarſe Ground* will *appear thro' it*.——See *how many poor Children* are wandering *naked* and *ignorant* about the Streets, and *in the Way* to all Kind of *Vice* and *Miſery*; and conſider *what can be done*, towards *clothing* ſome of them at leaſt, and *inſtructing them in* the Principles of Religion. Would *every thriving Family* in a Town, which is *able to afford Help* on ſuch Occaſions, *caſt a pitying Eye* on *one poor Family* in its Neighbourhood, and *take it under their Patronage*, to aſſiſt in *feeding*, and *clothing*, and *teaching the Children*, in *ſupporting it in Affliction*, in *defending it from Wrongs*, and in *adviſing thoſe* that have *the Management of it*, as Circumſtances might require, *how great a Difference* would *ſoon be produced* in the Appearance of Things amongſt us?——Obſerve *who are ſick*, that if there be *no Infirmary* at hand to which you can introduce them, (where *your Contribution* will yield *the largeſt Increaſe*,) you may *do ſomething* towards *relieving them at Home*, and *ſupplying them with Advice* and *Medicines*, as well as *with proper Diet* and *Attendance*.——Conſider alſo *the Spiritual Neceſſities* of Men; in providing for which, I would *particularly recommend* to you *the very important* and *noble Charity*, of *aſſiſting young Perſons of Genius* and *Piety*, with what is neceſſary *to ſupport the Expence* of their *Education for the Miniſtry*, in a proper

Courſe

Courſe of *Grammatical* or *Academical Studies.* And grudge not *ſome Proportion* of what GOD hath given you, *to thoſe*, who *reſigning all Temporal Views* to *miniſter to you the Goſpel of Chriſt*, have ſurely *an equitable Claim* to be *ſupported by you* in a Capacity of rendering you *thoſe Services*, however *laborious*, to which *for your Sakes*, and *that of our common Lord*, they have *devoted their Lives.* And while *you* are ſo abundantly *ſatisfied with the Goodneſs of GOD's Houſe, even of his holy Temple* (i), have *Compaſſion on thoſe* who dwell *in a Deſart Land*; and rejoice to *do ſomething* towards *ſending* among the diſtant Nations of *the Heathen World*, that *glorious Goſpel* which hath ſo long continued *unknown to Multitudes*, tho' *the Knowledge of it*, with becoming Regard, *be Life everlaſting.*——Theſe are *a few important Charities*, which I would *point out to thoſe*, whom *Providence has enriched* with its peculiar Bounties: And it renders *Gold more precious*, than it could appear in any other Light, that it is *capable of being employed* for ſuch Purpoſes. But if you ſhould not have *Gold* to ſpare for them, *contribute your Silver*: Or as *a Farthing*, or *a Mite*, is *not overlooked by GOD*, when it is given *from a truly generous* and *charitable Heart* (k), let *that* be chearfully *dropped into the Treaſury*, where richer Offerings cannot be afforded.

§. 12. AND, that amidſt ſo many *preſſing Demands for Charity*, you may be *better furniſhed to anſwer them*, ſeriouſly reflect on *your Manner of Living.* I ſay not, that GOD *requires*, you ſhould become *one of the many Poor*, relieved out of your Income. The *Support of Society*, as at preſent eſtabliſhed, will not only *permit*, but *require*, that *ſome Perſons* ſhould *allow themſelves in the Elegancies and Delights of Life*; by furniſhing which, *Multitudes of poor Families* are much more creditably and comfortably *ſubſiſted*, with greater *Advantage to themſelves* and *Safety to the Publick*, than they could be, if *the Price of their Labours*, or of *the Commodities* in which they deal, were to be *given them as an Alms*: Nor can I imagine it *grateful to GOD*, that *his Gifts* ſhould be *refuſed*, as if they were *meant for Snares* and *Curſes*, rather than *Benefits.* This were *to fruſtrate the benevolent Purpoſes* of the gracious *Father of Mankind*, and if *carried to its Rigour*

(i) Pſal. lxv. 4. (k) Mark xii. 42, 43.

would be a Sort of *Conſpiracy againſt the whole Syſte of Nature*. Let *the Bounties of Providence* be *uſed*; b let us carefully *ſee to it*, that it be *in a moderate* a *prudent Manner*, leſt, by our own Folly, *that* whi *ſhould have been for our Welfare, become a Trap* (l). L Conſcience ſay, my dear Reader, with regard to you ſelf, *what Proportion* of the good Things you poſſe *your heavenly Father intends for yourſelf*, and what *f your Brethren*; and live not, as if you had *no Brethre* as if *pleaſing yourſelf*, in all the Magnificence and Luxu you can deviſe, *were the End* for which you were ſe into the World. I fear, *this* is *the Exceſs of the pre Age*, and not *an Exceſs of Rigour* and *Mortification*. E amine therefore *your Expences*, and compare them wi *your Income*. *That* may be *ſhamefully extravagant* in y which may not only be *pardonable*, but *commendabl another* of ſuperior Eſtate. Nor can you be ſure, th *you do not exceed*, merely becauſe you *do not plunge yo ſelf in Debt*, nor render yourſelf *incapable of laying any Thing* for your Family. If you be *diſabled* from *ing any Thing for the Poor*, or any Thing *proportiona to your Rank in Life*, by that *genteel* and *elegant Wa living* which you affect, *GOD muſt diſapprove* of ſu a Conduct, and *you ought*, as you will anſwer it to hi *to retrench it*. And tho' *the Divine Indulgence* will u doubtedly be *exerciſed to thoſe*, in whom there is *a ſi cere Principle* of *Faith in Chriſt*, and undiſſembled *Lo to GOD* and *Man*, tho' it act not *to that Height of B neficence* and *Uſefulneſs* which *might have been attain* yet be aſſured of this, that *He who rendereth to ev one according to his Works*, will have *a ſtrict Regard the Degrees of Goodneſs* in the Diſtribution of *final R wards*: So that *every neglected Opportunity* draws after *an irreparable Loſs*, which will *go into Eternity* al *with you*. And let me add too, that *every Inſtance Negligence indulged* renders the Mind *ſtill more and m indolent* and *weak*, and conſequently *more indiſpoſed* to re *over the Ground* which has been *loſt*, or even to *maint that* which has *hitherto been kept*.

§. 13. COMPLAIN not, that *this* is *impoſing ha Things upon you*. I am only *directing your Pleaſure i*

(l) Pſal. lxix. 22.

a nobler Channel; and indeed *that Frugality*, which is *the Source of such a Generosity*, far from being *at all injurious* to *your Reputation*, will rather, amongst Wise and Good Men, *greatly promote it*. But you have *far nobler Motives* before you, than those which arise from *their Regards*. I speak to you, as to *a Child of GOD*, and *a Member of Christ*; as *joined* therefore by the most intimate Union *to all the Poorest* of those *that believe in him*. I speak to you, as *an Heir of Eternal Glory*, who ought therefore to have *Sentiments great* and *sublime*, in some Proportion to that *expected Inheritance*.

§. 14. CAST about therefore in your Thoughts, *what Good is to be done*, and what *You can do*, either *in your own Person*, or *by your Interest* with others; and *go about it with Resolution*, as *in the Name* and *Presence* of *the Lord*. And as *the Lord giveth Wisdom*, and *out of his Mouth come Knowledge and Understanding* (m), go to the Foot-stool of his Throne, and there *seek that Guidance* and *that Grace*, which may suit your present Circumstances, and may be effectual to produce *the Fruits of Holiness* and *Usefulness*, to *His* more abundant *Glory*, and to *the Honour* of your *Christian Profession*.

The Established CHRISTIAN *breathing after more extensive Usefulness.*

"OH Bountiful *Father*, and Sovereign *Author of all* "*Good*, whether *Natural* or *Spiritual*! I bless "Thee for *the various Talents*, with which Thou hast "*enriched so undeserving a Creature*, as I must acknow- "ledge myself to be. My Soul is in *the deepest Con-* "*fusion* before Thee, when I consider *to how little* "*Purpose* I have hitherto *improved them*. Alas! *what* "*have I done*, in Proportion to what Thou mightest "reasonably have expected, *with the Gifts of Nature* "which Thou hast bestowed upon me, with *my Capacities* "*of Life*, with *my Time*, with *my Possessions*, with *my* "*Influence over others*! Alas! thro' my own *Negligence* "and *Folly*, I look back on *a barren Wilderness*, where "I might have seen *a fruitful Field*, and *a springing*

"*Har-*

(m) Prov. ii. 6.

" *Harvest!* Justly do I indeed *deserve* to be *stripped of* " *all*, to be *brought to an immediate Account* for all, to " be *condemned as* in many Respects *unfaithful to Thee*, " and *to the World*, and *to my own Soul*; and, in con- " sequence of that Condemnation, to be *cast into the* " *Prison* of *Eternal Darkness!* But Thou, *Lord*, hast " *freely forgiven* the dreadful *Debt* of *Ten Thousand Ta-* " *lents*. Adored be *Thy Name* for it! Accept, *Oh Lord*, " accept *that renewed Surrender*, which I would now " make *of myself*, and *of all I have*, unto Thy Service! " I acknowledge, that it is *of Thine own that I give* " *Thee* (n). Make me, I beseech Thee, *a faithful Stew-* " *ard* for my great Lord; and may I think of *no sepa-* " *rate Interest of my own*, in Opposition to Thine!

" I adore Thee, Oh Thou *GOD of all Grace*, if " while I am thus speaking to Thee, I feel *the Love of* " *Thy Creatures* arising in my Soul; if I feel *my Heart* " *opening* to embrace *my Brethren of Mankind!* Oh " make me *Thy faithful Almoner*, in distributing to them " *all that Thou hast lodged* in mine Hand *for their Re-* " *lief!* And in determining what is *my own Share*, may " I *hold the Balance* with an equal Hand, and *judge* " *impartially* between myself and them! The Propor- " tion *Thou allowest*, may I thankfully *take for myself*, " and those who are immediately *mine!* The *rest*, may " I *distribute* with Wisdom, and Fidelity, and Chearful- " ness! *Guide mine Hand*, Oh ever merciful *Father*, while " Thou dost me the Honour to *make me Thine Instru-* " *ment* in dealing out *a few of Thy Bounties*; that I may " *bestow them* where they are *most needed*, and where " they will *answer the best End!* And, if it be Thy " gracious Will, do Thou *multiply the Seed sown* (o); " prosper me in my worldly Affairs, that I may have " *more to impart to them that need it*; and thus *lead me* " *on* to the *Region* of *everlasting Plenty*, and *everlasting* " *Benevolence!* There may I *meet with many*, to whom " I have been *an affectionate Benefactor* on Earth; and, " if it be Thy Blessed Will, *with many*, whom I have " also been *the Means of conducting* into the Path to *that* " *blissful Abode!* There may *they entertain me* in their " Habitations of Glory! And *in Time* and *Eternity*, do

" Thou,

(n) 1 Chron. xxix. 14. (o) 2 Cor. ix. 10.

" Thou, Lord, *accept the Praise of all, thro' Jesus Christ*;
" at whose Feet *I would bow*; and at whose Feet, after
" the most useful Course, *I would* at last *die*, with as
" much *Humility*, as if I were then exerting *the first Act*
" *of Faith* upon Him, and had never had *any Opportu-*
" *nity*, by one Tribute of Obedience and Gratitude in
" the Services of Life, *to approve its Sincerity!*"

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

The CHRISTIAN rejoicing in the Views of Death and Judgment.

Death and Judgment are near; but the Christian has Reason to welcome both: §. 1. *Yet Nature recoils from the Solemnity of them.* §. 2. *An Attempt to reconcile the Mind,* [I.] *To the Prospect of Death,* §. 3. *from the Consideration,* (1.) *Of the many Evils that surround us in this Mortal Life.* §. 4. (2.) *Of the Remainder of Sin which we feel within us.* §. 5. *And* (3.) *Of the Happiness which is immediately to succeed Death.* §. 6, 7. *All which might make the Christian willing to die, in the most agreeable Circumstances of Human Life.* §. 8. [II.] *The Christian has Reason to rejoice in the Prospect of Judgment:* §. 9. *Since, however awful it be, Christ will then come, to vindicate His Honour, to display His Glory, and to triumph over His Enemies:* §. 10. *As also to compleat the Happiness of every Believer,* §. 11. *and of the whole Church.* §. 12, 13. *The Meditation of a Christian, whose Heart is warmed with these Prospects.*

§. 1. WHEN the *Visions of the Lord* were closed upon *John, the beloved Disciple,* in the Island of *Patmos,* it is observable, that He who gave him *that Revelation,* even JESUS *the faithful and true Witness,* concludes with those lively and important Words: *He who testifieth these Things saith, Surely I come quickly:* And *John* answers with the greatest Readiness and Pleasure, *Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus* (a). Come, as thou hast said, *surely,* and *quickly!* And remem-

(a) Rev. xxii. 20.

member, *Oh Chriſtian*, whoever you are that are now reading theſe Words, *your Divine Lord* ſpeaks in the *ſame Language* to you: *Behold, I come quickly.* Yes, *very quickly* will He *come by Death*, to turn *the Key*, to open *the Door* of *the Grave* for thine Admittance thither, and to lead thee *thro' it* into the *now unknown Regions* of the *inviſible World*. Nor is it long before *the Judge*, who *ſtandeth at the Door* (b), will *appear* alſo *to the univerſal Judgment*: And tho' perhaps, not only *Scores*, but *Hundreds of Years* may lie between *that Period* and the *preſent Moment*, yet it is but *a very ſmall Point of Time* to Him, who views *at once* all the unmeaſurable Ages of a paſt and future Eternity. *A Thouſand Years are with Him but as One Day, and One Day as a Thouſand Years* (c). In both theſe Senſes then does He *come quickly*: And I truſt, you can anſwer with a glad *Amen*, that the Warning is not *terrible*, or *unpleaſant* to your Ears; but rather, that *His Coming*, His *certain*, His *ſpeedy Coming*, is the Object of *your delightful Hope*, and of *your longing Expectation*.

§. 2. I AM ſure, it is reaſonable *it ſhould be ſo*: And yet perhaps *Nature*, fond of Life, and unwilling to part with *a long known Abode*, to enter on *a State* to which it is entirely *a Stranger*, may *recoil* from the Thoughts of *Dying*; or, ſtruck with the awful Pomp of *an expiring* and *diſſolving World*, may look on *the Judgment-Day* with ſome Mixture of *Terror*. And therefore, *my dear Brother in the Lord*, (for as ſuch I can now eſteem you,) I would *reaſon with you* a little on this Head, and would *intreat you* to look *more attentively* on this ſolemn Object, which will, I truſt, *grow leſs diſagreeable* to you, as it is *more familiarly viewed*. Nay, I hope, that inſtead of *ſtarting back from it*, you will rather *ſpring forward towards it* with Joy and Delight.

§. 3. THINK, *Oh Chriſtian*, when *Chriſt comes* to call you away by *Death*, He *comes*——to ſet you at Liberty from *your preſent Sorrows*,——to deliver you from *your Struggles with remaining Corruption*,——and to receive you to *dwell with himſelf* in compleat Holineſs and Joy. You ſhall *be abſent from the Body, and be preſent with the Lord* (d).

§. 4. HE

(b) Jam. v. 9. (c) Pet. iii. 8. (d) 2 Cor. v. 8.

§. 4. He will indeed *call you away from this World.* But Oh *what is this World,* that you ſhould be *fond of it,* and cling to it with ſo much Eagerneſs? *How low* are all thoſe *Enjoyments* that are peculiar to it; and *how many* its *Vexations,* its *Snares,* and its *Sorrows?* Review *your Pilgrimage* thus far; and tho' you muſt acknowledge, that *Goodneſs and Mercy have followed you all the Days of your Life* (e), yet has not that very *Mercy itſelf* planted *ſome Thorns* in your Paths, and given you *ſome wiſe* and *neceſſary,* yet *painful Intimations,* that *this is not your Reſt* (f)? Review *the Moments* of your *withered Joys,* of your *blaſted Hopes*; if there be yet *any Monuments* of them *remaining,* more than *a mournful Remembrance* they have *left behind* in your afflicted Heart. Look upon *the Graves,* that have *ſwallowed up many* of your deareſt and moſt amiable *Friends,* perhaps in the very *Bloom of Life,* and in the greateſt *Intimacy* of your Converſe with them; and reflect, that if you hold it out a few Years more, *Death* will *renew its Conqueſts* at your Expence, and *devour the moſt precious* of thoſe that yet ſurvive. View *the Living,* as well as *the Dead:* Behold *the State of Human Nature,* under the many *grievous Marks* of its *Apoſtacy from GOD*; and ſay, whether *a wiſe* and *good Man* would *wiſh* to continue *always here.* Methinks were *I myſelf ſecure* from being reached by any of *the Arrows* that fly around me, *I could not but mourn,* to ſee *the Wounds* that are given by them, and to hear *the Groans* of thoſe that are continually falling under them. *The Diſeaſes* and *Calamities* of Mankind are *ſo many,* and (which is moſt grievous of all,) *the Diſtempers of their Minds* are *ſo various* and *ſo threatning,* that *the World appears* almoſt like *an Hoſpital:* And a Man, whoſe *Heart* is *tender,* is ready to feel *his Spirits broken,* as he walks thro' it, and ſurveys *the ſad Scene*; eſpecially when he ſees, *how little he can do* for the *Recovery* of thoſe whom he *pities.* Are you *a Chriſtian,* and does it not *pierce your Heart* to ſee how *Human Nature is ſunk,* in *Vice,* and in *Shame?* to ſee with what amazing Inſolence *ſome* are ſo vile as to be *open in their Sins,* and how *the Name of Chriſt* is *diſhonoured* by many too that call themſelves *His People?* to ſee *the unlawful Deeds*

(e) Pſal. xxiii. 6. (f) Mic. ii. 10.

Deeds and *filthy Practices* of them that *live ungodly*, and to behold, at the ſame Time, *the Infirmities* at leaſt, and *Irregularities* of thoſe, concerning whom we have *better Hopes?* And do you not *wiſh* to *eſcape from ſuch a World*, where *a righteous* and compaſſionate *Soul* muſt be *vexed from Day to Day* by ſo many Spectacles of Sin and Miſery (g)?

§. 5. YEA, to come *nearer Home*, do you not feel *ſomething within you*, which you *long to quit*, and which would *imbitter* even *Paradiſe* itſelf? *Something*, which, were it to continue, would *grieve* and *diſtreſs you* even *in the Society of the Bleſſed?* Do you not feel *a Remainder of indwelling Sin?* Are you not *ſtruggling* every Day *with ſome Reſidue of Corruption*, or at leaſt *mourning* on Account *of the Weakneſs of your Graces?* Do you not often find *your Spirits dull and languid*, when you would deſire to *raiſe them to the greateſt Fervour* in the Service of GOD? Do you not find *your Hearts* too often *inſenſible* of the richeſt Inſtances *of his Love*, and *your Hands feeble* in his Service, when *to will is preſent with you* (h)? Does not *your Life*, in its *beſt Days* and *Hours*, appear *a low unprofitable Thing*, when compared with *what* you are ſenſible *it ought to be*, and with *what you wiſh that it were?* Are you not frequently, as it were, *ſtretching the Pinions of the Mind*, and ſaying, *Oh that I had Wings like a Dove, that I might fly away, and be at Reſt* (i)?

§. 6. SHOULD you not then *rejoice in the Thought*, that JESUS *comes* to *deliver you from theſe Complaints?* That He *comes* to *anſwer your Wiſhes*, and to *fulfil the largeſt Deſires* of your Hearts; *thoſe Deſires*, that He himſelf has inſpired? That He *comes* to *open upon you a World* of *Purity* and *Joy*, of *active, exalted*, and *unwearied Services?*

§. 7. OH *Chriſtian*, how often have you caſt *a longing Eye* towards *thoſe happy Shores*, and wiſhed *to paſs the Sea*, the boiſterous, unpleaſant, dangerous *Sea*, that ſeparates you from them? When *your Lord* has condeſcended to make you *a ſhort Viſit* in his Ordinances on Earth, how have you *bleſt the Time*, and *the Place*, and pronounced it, amidſt any other Diſadvantage of Situation, to be *the very Gate of Heaven* (k)? And is it ſo delightful *to be-*

(g) 2 Pet. ii. 8. (h) Rom. vii. 18. (i) Pſal. lv. 6.
(k) Gen. xxviii. 17.

hold this Gate, and will it not be much more ſo *to enter into it?* Is it ſo delightful *to receive the Viſits of Jeſus for an Hour,* and will it not be infinitely more ſo *to dwell with him for ever?* "LORD," may you well ſay, "when I *dwell with Thee,* I ſhall *dwell in Holineſs,* "for Thou Thyſelf art *Holineſs*; I ſhall *dwell in Love,* "for Thou Thyſelf art *Love*; I ſhall *dwell in Joy,* for "Thou art *the Fountain of Joy,* as *Thou art in the Fa-* "*ther, and the Father in Thee* (l)." Bid welcome to His Approach therefore, to *take you at your Word,* and to *fulfil* to you *that Saying of His,* on which your Soul has ſo often reſted with Heavenly Peace and Pleaſure; *Father, I will, that they whom Thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which Thou haſt given me* (m).

§. 8. SURELY you may ſay in this View, "The "ſooner *Chriſt comes,* the better." What tho' *the Reſidue of your Days* be *cut off in the Midſt?* What tho' you leave *many expected Pleaſures* in Life *untaſted,* and *many Schemes unaccompliſhed?* Is it not *enough,* that what is *taken from a mortal Life* ſhall be *added to a glorious Eternity*; and that you ſhall *ſpend thoſe Days* and *Years* in the *Preſence* and *Service* of *Chriſt in Heaven,* which you might *otherwiſe* have *ſpent with him* and *for him* in the *imperfect Enjoyments* and *Labours of Earth?*

§. 9. BUT your Proſpects *reach* not only *beyond Death,* but beyond *the ſeparate State.* For with regard to His *final Appearance to Judgment* our Lord ſays, *Surely I come quickly,* in the Senſe illuſtrated before: And ſo it will appear to us, if we compare *this Interval of Time* with *the bliſsful Eternity* which is to *ſucceed it*; and probably, if we compare it with *thoſe Ages* which have *already paſſed,* ſince the Sun began to meaſure out to Earth its Days and its Years. And will you not be alſo *ſing your Part* in the joyful Anthem, *Amen, even come, Lord Jeſus!*

§. 10. IT is true, *Chriſtian,* it is *an awful Day;* a Day, in which *Nature* ſhall be *thrown into a Confuſion* as yet unknown. No *Earthquake,* no *Eruption of burning Mountains,* no *Deſolation* of Cities *by devouring Flames,* or of Countries *by overflowing Rivers or Seas* can give *any juſt Emblem* of *that dreadful Day*; which

(l) John xvii. 21. (m) John xvii. 24.

the Heavens being on Fire ſhall be diſſolved, as well as *the Earth, and all that is therein, ſhall be burnt up* (n); when *all Nature* ſhall *flee away* in Amazement *before the Face of the univerſal Judge* (o), and there ſhall be *a great Cry*, far beyond what was known *in the Land of Egypt*, when *there was not a Houſe in which there was not one dead* (p). Your *Fleſh* may be ready to *tremble* at the View; yet *your Spirit* muſt ſurely *rejoice in GOD your Saviour* (q). You may juſtly ſay, "Let this illuſtrious Day come, even with all its Horrors!" Yea, like *the Chriſtians* deſcribed by *the Apoſtle* (r), you may be *looking for, and haſting to that Day* of terrible Brightneſs and univerſal Doom. For *your Lord* will then *come, to vindicate the Juſtice* of *thoſe Proceedings*, which have been in many Inſtances *ſo much obſcured*, and becauſe they have been *obſcured* have been alſo *blaſphemed*. He will come, to *diſplay His Magnificence*, deſcending from Heaven *with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of GOD* (s); taking his Seat *upon a Throne* infinitely exceeding *that of Earthly*, or even *of Celeſtial Princes*, clothed with *His Father's Glory, and His own* (t); ſurrounded with a numberleſs Hoſt of *ſhining Attendants*, and *coming to be glorified in His Saints, and admired in all them that believe* (u). His *Enemies* ſhall alſo be *produced* to *grace His Triumph*: The *Serpent* ſhall be ſeen there *rolling in the Duſt*, and *trodden under Foot* by Him and by all His Servants: *Thoſe*, who once *condemned Him*, ſhall *tremble at His Preſence*; and *thoſe*, who *bowed the Knee before Him* in profane Mockery, ſhall in wild Deſpair *call to the Mountains to fall upon them, and to the Rocks to hide them from the Face of the Lamb of GOD* (x), whom they once led away to the moſt inhuman Slaughter.

11. OH *Chriſtian*, does not your loyal Heart *bound at the Thought?* And are you not *ready*, even while you read theſe Lines, *to begin the victorious Shout* in which you are then to join? He juſtly expects, that *your Thoughts* ſhould be *greatly elevated* and *impreſſed* with the Views of *his Triumph*; but at the ſame Time He permits you, to

(n) 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12. (o) Rev. xx. 11. (p) Exod. xii. 30.
(q) Luke i. 47. (r) 2 Pet. iii. 12. (s) 1 Theſſ. iv. 16.
(t) Luke ix. 26. (u) 2 Theſſ. i. 10. (x) Rev. vi. 16.

to remember *your own perſonal Share* in the *Joy* and *Glory* of that *bleſſed Day:* And even now He has *the View before Him* of what *His Power* and *Love* ſhall *then accompliſh* for your Salvation. And what ſhall it *not accompliſh?* He ſhall *come*, to *break the Bars of the Grave*, and to *reanimate your ſleeping Clay*. Your *Bodies* muſt indeed be *laid in the Duſt*, and be lodged there *as a Teſtimony* of GOD's *Diſpleaſure againſt Sin*; againſt *the firſt Sin* that was ever committed, from the ſad Conſequences of which *the deareſt of His Children* cannot be exempted. But you ſhall then *have an Ear* to *hear the Voice of the Son of GOD*, and *an Eye* to *behold the Luſtre of His Appearance*; and ſhall *ſhine forth like the Sun* (y) ariſing in the clear Heaven, *which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber* (z). Your Soul ſhall be *new dreſſed*, to grace this high Solemnity; and be *clothed*, not with *the Rags of Morality*, but with *the Robes of Glory*; for He *ſhall change this vile Body, to faſhion it like His own glorious Body* (a). And when you are *thus royally arrayed*, He ſhall *confer publick Honours* on *you*, and on *all His People*, before the aſſembled World. You may *now* perhaps be *loaded with Infamy*, called by *reproachful Names*, and charged with *Crimes*, or with *Views* which your very Soul abhors: But He will then *bring forth your Righteouſneſs as the Light* (b), *and your Salvation as a Lamp that burneth* (c). Tho' you have been *diſhonoured by Men*, you ſhall be *acknowledged by GOD*; and tho' treated *as the Filth of the World*, and *the Off-ſcouring of all Things* (d), He will ſhew, that He regards you *as His Treaſure, in the Day that He makes up His Jewels* (e). When He ſhall *put away all the Wicked of the Earth like Droſs* (f), you ſhall be *pronounced Righteous* in that full Aſſembly; and though indeed you have *broken the Divine Law*, and *might* in ſtrict Juſtice *have been condemned*, yet being *clothed with the Righteouſneſs* of the great *Redeemer*, even *that Righteouſneſs which is of GOD by Faith* (g), *Juſtice* itſelf ſhall *acquit you*, and join with *Mercy* in *beſtowing upon you the Crown of Life* (h). *Chriſt* will *confeſs you before His*

(y) Mat. xiii. 43. (z) Pſal. xix. 5. (a) Phil. iii. 21.
(b) Pſal. xxxvii. 6. (c) Iſai. lxii. 1. (d) 1 Cor. iv. 13.
(e) Mal. iii. 17. (f) Pſal. cxix. 119. (g) Phil. iii. 9. (h) 2 Tim. iv.

and Angels (i), will pronounce you *good and faithful Servants*, and call you to *enter into the Joy of your Lord* (k): He will *ſpeak of you* with Endearment *as his Brethren*, and will *acknowledge the Kindneſſes* which have been *ſhewn to you*, as if He had *received them in his own Perſon* (l). Yea, then ſhall *you*, *Oh Chriſtian*, who may perhaps *have ſate* in ſome of the *loweſt Places* in our Aſſemblies, tho' it may be *none of the Rich* and *Great of the Earth* would condeſcend to *look upon* or to *ſpeak to you*, be called to be *Aſſeſſors with Chriſt* on His *Judgment-Seat*, and to *join with Him* in the *Sentence* He ſhall paſs *on wicked Men* and *rebellious Angels*.

§. 12. NOR is it merely *one Day* of *Glory* and of *Triumph*. But when *the Judge ariſes* and *aſcends* to His Father's Court, *all the Bleſſed* ſhall *aſcend with Him*, and *you* among the reſt: *You ſhall aſcend* together with your Saviour, *to His Father and your Father, to His GOD and your GOD* (n). You *ſhall go*, to make your *Appearance* in *the New Jeruſalem*, in thoſe *new ſhining Forms* that you have received, *which will* no doubt *be attended* with a correſpondent *Improvement of Mind*; and take up your *perpetual Abode* in that *Fulneſs of Joy*, with which you ſhall be filled and ſatisfied *in the Preſence of GOD* (o), upon the *Conſummation* of that *Happineſs*, which *the Saints* in the intermediate State *have been wiſhing* and *waiting for*. You *ſhall go*, from *the Ruins* of a *diſſolving World*, to *the new Heavens and new Earth, wherein Righteouſneſs* for ever *dwells* (p). There *all the Number of GOD's Elect* ſhall be *accompliſhed*, and the *Happineſs of each* ſhall be *compleated*. The *whole Society* ſhall be *preſented before GOD*, as *the Bride, the Lamb's Wife* (q), whom the Eye of its *Celeſtial Bridegroom* ſhall ſurvey with *unutterable Rapture*, and confeſs to be *without Spot or Wrinkle, or any ſuch Thing* (r); its *Character* and *State* being juſt what He originally *deſigned it to be*, when He firſt engaged to *give himſelf for it*, to *redeem it to GOD by His Blood* (s). *So ſhall you ever be* with each other, and *with the Lord* (t); and

(i) Luke xii. 8. (k) Mat. xxv. 21. (l) Mat. xxv. 40.
(n) John xx. 17. (o) Pſal. xvi. 11. (p) 2 Pet. iii. 13.
(q) Rev. xxi. 9. (r) Eph. v. 27. (s) Rev. v. 9. (t) 1 Theſſ. iv. 17.

immortal Ages shall roll away, and find you *still unchanged*; your *Happiness* always *the same*, and your *Relish for it the same*; or rather *ever growing*, as your Souls are *approaching nearer and nearer* to Him, who is *the Source of Happiness*, and the *Centre of Infinite Perfection*.

§. 13. And now, *look round about* upon Earth, and *single out*, if you can, *the Enjoyments* or *the Hopes*, for the Sake of which you would say, *Lord, delay thy Coming*; or for the Sake of which you any more should hesitate to express your *Longing for it*, and to cry, *Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!*

The Meditation *and* Prayer *of a* Christian, *whose Heart is warmed with these Prospects.*

" O BLESSED LORD! My Soul is *enlighten*
" in these Views; and *while I muse, the Fire*
" *burns* (u). Thou hast *testified*, Thou *comest quickly*:
" And I repeat my joyful Assent, *Amen, even so come,*
" *Lord Jesus* (x)! *Come*, for I *long to have done with*
" *this low Life*; to have done with *its Burthens*, its Sor-
" *rows*, and its *Snares*! *Come*, for I *long to ascend* into Thy
" *Presence*, and to *see the Court* Thou art holding above!
" Blessed Jesus, *Death is transformed*, when I view
" it *in this Light*. *The King of Terrors* is seen no more
" *as such*, so near *the King of Glory* and *of Grace*. I
" hear with Pleasure *the Sound of Thy Feet*, approach-
" ing still nearer and nearer: *Draw aside the Veil*, what-
" ever Thou pleasest! *Open the Bars of my Prison*, that
" my eager Soul may *spring forth to Thee*, and *cast it-*
" *self at Thy Feet*; at the Feet of that Jesus, whom
" *having not seen, I love*; and *in whom, tho' now I see*
" *Thee not, yet believing, I rejoice with Joy unspeakable*
" *and full of Glory* (y)! Thou, Lord, *shalt shew me the*
" *Path of Life*: Thine Hand shall *guide me* to Thy
" *blissful Abode*, where *there is Fulness of Joy*, and
" *Rivers of everlasting Pleasure* (z). Thou shalt *prepare*
" *me an Habitation* with Thy *faithful Servants*, where
" *separate Spirits* are now *living with Thee*.

(u) Psal. xxxix. 3. (x) Rev. xxii. 20. (y) 1 Pet. i. 8.
(z) Psal. xvi. 11.

" *their Bodies sleep in the Dust.* Many of them have
" been *my Companions* in Thy laborious Work, and *in*
" *the Patience and Tribulation of Thy Kingdom* (a); *my*
" *dear Companions*, and *my Brethren.* Oh *shew me*,
" Blessed Saviour, *how glorious* and *how happy* Thou hast
" made them! *Shew me*, to what *new Forms of better*
" *Life* Thou hast conducted *them*, whom we call *the*
" *Dead!* In what *nobler* and *more extensive Services*
" Thou hast employed them! That I may *praise Thee*
" *better* than I now can, *for Thy Goodness to them!*
" And Oh give me to *share with them* in *their Blessings*
" and *their Services*, and to *raise a Song of grateful*
" *Love*, like *that* which *they* are *breathing forth before*
" *Thee!*

" Yet, Oh my *Blessed Redeemer*, even *there* will *my*
" *Soul* be *aspiring* to *a yet nobler* and *more glorious*
" *Hope*; and from this *as yet unknown Splendour* and
" *Felicity*, shall I be *drawing new Arguments* to *look*
" and *long for* the *Day of Thy final Appearance.* There
" shall I *long more ardently* than I now do, to see *Thy*
" *Conduct vindicated*, and *Thy Triumph displayed*; to see
" *the Dust of Thy Servants reanimated*, and *Death*, *the*
" *last of their Enemies*, and *of Thine*, *swallowed up in*
" *Victory* (b). I shall *long* for *that superior Honour* that
" Thou intendest me, and *that compleat Bliss* to which
" *the whole Body of Thy People* shall be conducted. *Come*,
" *Lord Jesus*, *come quickly*, will mingle itself with *the*
" *Songs of Paradise*, and sound from the Tongues of *all*
" *the Millions of Thy Saints* whom Thy Grace has trans-
" planted thither.

" In the mean Time, Oh my *Divine Master*, accept
" *the Homage* which a grateful Heart *now pays Thee*, in
" a Sense of *the glorious Hopes* with which Thou hast
" inspired it! It is *Thou*, that hast *put this Joy* into it,
" and hast *raised my Soul* to this *glorious Ambition*;
" whereas I might *otherwise* have *now* been *groveling*
" *in the lowest Trifles* of *Time* and *Sense*, and been *look-*
" *ing with Horror* on *that Hour*, which is now *the*
" *Object* of my *most ardent Wishes.*

" Oh *be with me always* even *to the End* of this
" mortal Life! and give me, while *waiting for Thy Sal-*
" *vation*,

(a) Rev. i. 9. (b) 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54.

" *vation*, to be *doing Thy Commandments!* May *my Loins*
" *be girded about, and my Lamp burning* (c); and *mine*
" *Ears* be ſtill *watchful* for the *bleſſed Signal* of *Thine*
" *Arrival*: That *my glowing Soul* may with Pleaſure
" *ſpring to meet Thee*, and be *ſtrengthened by Death* to
" bear *thoſe Viſions of Glory*, under *the Extaſies* of
" which *feeble Mortality* would *now expire!*"

(c) Luke xii. 35.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

The CHRISTIAN honouring GOD by his Dying Behaviour.

Reflections on the Sincerity with which the preceding Advices have been given. §. 1. *The Author is desirous, that (if Providence permit) he may assist the Christian to die honourably and comfortably.* §. 2, 3. *With this View it is advised,* (1.) *To rid the Mind of all Earthly Cares.* §. 4. (2.) *To renew the Humiliation of the Soul before* GOD, *and its Application to the Blood of Christ.* §. 5. (3.) *To exercise Patience under bodily Pains and Sorrows.* §. 6. (4.) *At leaving the World, to bear an honourable Testimony to Religion.* §. 7. (5.) *To give a solemn Charge to surviving Friends,* §. 8. *especially recommending Faith in Christ.* §. 9. (6.) *To keep the Promises of* GOD *in View.* §. 10, 11. *And,* (7.) *To commit the departing Spirit to* GOD, *in the genuine Exercises of Gratitude and Repentance, Faith and Charity;* §. 12. *which are exemplified in the concluding Meditation and Prayer.*

§. 1. THUS, my dear Reader, I have endeavoured to *lead you* thro' *a Variety of Circumstances*; and those, *not fancied* and *imaginary*, but such as *do indeed occur* in the Human and Christian Life. And I can truly and chearfully say, that I have *marked out* to you *the Path* which I have *myself trod*, and in which it is my Desire *still to go on*. I have ventured *my own Everlasting Interests* on *that Foundation*, on which I have directed you to *adventure yours*. What I have recommended as *the grand Business of your Life*, I desire to make *the Business of my own*: And the most considerable

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Enjoyments, which *I expect* or *desire* in the remaining Days of my Pilgrimage on Earth, are *such* as I have *directed you to seek*, and endeavoured to assist you in attaining. Such *Love to GOD*, such constant *Activity in his Service*, such *pleasurable Views* of what lies *beyond the Grave*, appear to me (*GOD* is my Witness,) *a Felicity* incomparably *beyond any Thing else* which can offer itself to our Affection and Pursuit: And I *would not* for Ten Thousand Worlds *resign my Share* in them, or *consent* even *to the Suspension* of the *Delights* which they afford, during the Remainder of my Abode here.

§. 2. I WOULD *humbly hope*, thro' the Divine Blessing, that *the Hours* you have spent *in the Review of these plain Things* may have turned to *some profitable Account*; and that in Consequence of what you have read, you have either been brought *into the Way of Life* and *Peace*, or been induced to *quicken your Pace in it*. Most heartily should I *rejoice* in being *further useful to you*, and that *even to the last*. Now there is *one Scene remaining*; a Scene, *thro' which you must* infallibly *pass*; which has something in it *so awful*, that I cannot but *attempt* doing a little *to assist you in it*: I mean, *the dark Valley of the Shadow of Death*. I could *earnestly wish*, that for the Credit of your Profession, the Comfort of your own Soul, and the Joy and Edification of your surviving Friends, *you might die*, not only *safely*, but *honourably* too: And therefore I would offer you *a few parting Advices*. I am sensible indeed, that *Providence* may determine *the Circumstances of your Death* in such a Manner, as that you may have *no Opportunity of acting* upon the Hints I now give you. Some *unexpected Accident* from without, or from within, *may* as it were *whirl you to Heaven before you are aware*; and you may find yourself *so suddenly there*, that it may *seem a Translation* rather than *a Death*. Or it is possible, *the Force of a Distemper* may *affect your Understanding* in such a Manner, that you may be *quite insensible* of the Circumstance in which you are; and so *your Dissolution* (tho' others may see it visibly and certainly approaching,) may be *as great a Surprize to you*, as if you had *died in full Health*.

§. 3. BUT as it is on the whole *probable*, you may have *a more sensible Passage* out of Time into Eternity; and as

as *much* may, in various Reſpects, *depend on your dying Behaviour*; give me leave to propoſe *ſome plain Directions* with Relation to it, *to be practiſed*, if GOD give you Opportunity, and remind you of them. It may not be improper to look over *the laſt Chapter* again, when you find *the Symptoms* of any *threatning Diſorder*: And I the rather *hope*, that what I ſay may be *uſeful to you*, as methinks I find myſelf *diſpoſed to addreſs you* with ſomething of *that peculiar Tenderneſs* which we feel *for a dying Friend*; to whom, as we expect that we ſhall *ſpeak to him no more*, we *ſend out* as it were *all our Hearts* in every Word.

§. 4. I WOULD adviſe then, in the firſt Place, that *as ſoon as poſſible* you would endeavour to *get rid of all further Care* with Regard to *your Temporal Concerns*, by *ſettling them in Time* in as Reaſonable and Chriſtian a Manner as you can. I could wiſh, there may be *nothing of that Kind* to *hurry your Mind* when you are leaſt able to bear it, or to *diſtreſs* or *divide* thoſe who come after you. Do *that*, which in the Preſence of GOD *you judge moſt equitable*, and which *you verily believe* will be *moſt pleaſing to Him*. Do it *in as prudent* and *effectual a Manner*, as you can: And then, *conſider the World* as a Place you have *quite done with*, and *its Affairs* as *nothing further to you*, more than to *one actually dead*; unleſs as you may *do any Good to its Inhabitants*, while yet you continue among them; and may, by any Circumſtance *in your laſt Actions* or *Words* in Life, *leave a Bleſſing behind you* to thoſe, who have been *your Friends* and *Fellow-Travellers*, while you have been diſpatching *that Journey thro' it*, which you are now finiſhing.

§. 5. THAT you may be *the more at Leiſure*, and *the better prepared* for this, enter into ſome *ſerious Review* of *your own State*; and endeavour to *put your Soul* into *as fit a Poſture* as poſſible, *for your ſolemn Appearance* before GOD: For *a ſolemn Thing indeed* it is, *to go into his immediate Preſence*; to ſtand before Him, *not as a Supplicant* at the Throne of his Grace, *but* at his Bar *as a ſeparate Spirit*, whoſe *Time of Probation* is *over*, and whoſe *Eternal State* is to be *immediately determined*. Renew your *Humiliation before GOD* for the Imperfections of your Life, tho' it has in the Main been devoted

devoted to his Service. Renew your *Application* to the *Mercies of* GOD as promised in the Covenant of Grace, and to the *Blood of Christ* as the blessed Channel in which they flow. *Resign yourself* entirely *to the Divine Disposal* and *Conduct*, as willing to serve GOD, either in this World or the other, as He shall see fit. And *sensible* of *your Sinfulness* on the one hand, and of *the Divine Wisdom* and *Goodness* on the other, *summon up* all the Fortitude of your Soul *to bear* as well as you can *whatever his afflicting Hand* may further *lay upon you*, and to receive *the last Stroke of it*, as one who would maintain *the most entire Subjection* to the great and good *Father of Spirits*.

§. 6. WHATEVER *you suffer*, endeavour to shew yourself *an Example of Patience*. Let that amiable Grace *have its perfect Work* (a); and since it has *so little more to do*, let it close the Scene nobly. Let there *not be a murmuring Word*; and that that there may not, *watch against every repining Thought*: And when you feel *any Thing of that Kind* arising, *look by Faith* upon *a dying Saviour*, and ask your own Heart, "Was not *His* "*Cross* much more *painful*, than *the Bed* on which I "lie? Was not *His Situation* among *Blood-thirsty Ene-* "*mies* infinitely more *terrible*, than *mine* amidst the "Tenderness and Care of *so many affectionate Friends*? "Did not *the heavy Load of my Sins press Him* in a "much more *overwhelming Manner*, than *I am press'd* "by the Load of *these Afflictions*? And yet He bore "all *as a Lamb* that is *brought to the Slaughter* (b)." Let the Remembrance of *His Sufferings* be a Means to *sweeten yours*; yea, let it *cause you to rejoice*, when you are *called to bear the Cross* for a little while, *before you wear the Crown*. *Count it all Joy*, that you have an *Opportunity* yet once more *of honouring GOD* by your *Patience*, which is now acting *its last Part*, and will in *a few Days*, perhaps *in a few Hours*, be superseded by *compleat everlasting Blessedness*. And I am willing to hope, that *in these Views* you will not only *suppress* all *passionate Complaints*, but that *your Mouth* will be *filled with the Praises of GOD*; and that you will be *speaking* to those that are about you, not only of *His*

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(a) Jam. i. 4. (b) Isai. liii. 7.

Juſtice, but *of His Goodneſs* too. So that you will be enabled to *communicate your inward Joys* in ſuch a Manner, as may be a lively and edifying *Comment* upon *thoſe Words* of the Apoſtle, *Tribulation worketh Patience; and Patience, Experience; and Experience, Hope*; even *a Hope* which *maketh not aſhamed*, while *the Love of GOD is ſhed abroad in our Hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt which is given unto us* (c).

§. 7. And *now*, my dear Friend, *now is the Time*, when it is eſpecially *expected from you*, that you *bear an honourable Teſtimony to Religion*. Tell thoſe that are about you, *as well as you can*, (for you will never be able fully to expreſs it,) *what Comfort* and *Support* you have found in it. Tell them, how it has *brightened the darkeſt Circumſtances* of your *Life*: Tell them, how it *now reconciles you* to the *near Views* of *Death*. Your *Words*, will carry with them *a peculiar Weight* at ſuch a Seaſon: There will be *a Kind of Eloquence*, even *in the Infirmities* with which you are ſtruggling, while you *give them Utterance*; and you will be *heard* with *Attention*, with *Tenderneſs*, with *Credit*. And therefore, when *the Time of your Departure is at hand*, with unaffected Freedom *breathe out your Joy*, if you then *feel* (as I hope you will,) *an holy Joy* and *Delight in GOD*. Breathe out however *your inward Peace* and *Serenity of Mind*, if you be then *peaceful* and *ſerene*: Others will *mark it*, and be *encouraged* to *tread the Steps* which lead to *ſo happy an End*. Tell them, *what you feel* of the *Vanity of the World*; and they may *learn* to *regard it leſs*: Tell them, *what you feel* of the *Subſtantial Supports of the Goſpel*; and they may *learn* to *value it more*: For they cannot but know, that *they* muſt *lie down on a dying Bed* too, and muſt then *need all the Relief* which *the Goſpel itſelf* can give them.

§. 8. And to inforce the Conviction the more, *give a ſolemn Charge* to thoſe that are about you, that *they ſpend their Lives* in the *Service of GOD*, and *govern themſelves* by the *Principles of real Religion*. You may remember, that *Joſhua*, and *David*, and other good Men *did ſo*; when they perceived, that *the Days drew near* in which *they ſhould die*. And you know not, how

(c) Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

the Admonitions of a dying Friend, or (as it may be with respect to some,) *of a dying Parent*, may *impress those* who may have *disregarded* what *you* and *others* may have *said to them before*. At least, *make the Trial*; and *diligently labouring* to *glorify GOD*, to *save Souls*, and generously *to sow the Seeds* of *Goodness* and *Happiness* in a World, where you have *no more Harvests to reap*. Perhaps they may *spring up in a plentiful Crop*, when *the Clods of the Valley* are *covering your Body*: But *if not*, GOD will *approve it*; and *the Angels*, that wait around your Bed to receive your departing Soul, will *look upon each other* with *Marks of Approbation* in their Countenance, and *own*, that *this* is *to expire like a Christian*, and to make a glorious Improvement of Mortality.

§. 9. And in *this last Address* to your Fellow-Mortals, who ever they are that Providence brings near you, be sure that you *tell them*, how entirely and how chearfully *your Hopes* and *Dependance* in this Season of the last Extremity *are fixed*, not upon your own Merits and Obedience, but *on what the great Redeemer has done*, and has *suffered* for Sinners. Let them see, that *you die* as it were *at the Foot of the Cross:* Nothing will be *so comfortable to yourselves*, nothing *so edifying to them*. Let *the Name of* Jesus therefore *be in your Mouth*, while you are *able to speak*; and when you can *speak no longer*, let it *be in your Heart*, and endeavour that *the last Act of your Soul*, while it continues in the Body, may be *an Act of humble Faith in Christ*. Come *unto* GOD *by Him: Enter into that* which is *within the Veil*, as with *the Blood of Sprinkling* fresh upon you. It is *an awful Thing* for *such a Sinner*, (as *you*, my Christian Friend, with *all the Virtues* the World may have admired, *know yourself to be*,) to stand before *that infinitely pure and holy Being*, who has *seen all your Ways*, and *all your Heart*, and has a perfect Knowledge of *every Mixture of Imperfection* which has attended the best of your Duties: But *venture in that Way*, and you will *find it* both *safe* and *pleasant*.

§. 10. Once more, To give you *Comfort in a dying Hour*, and to *support your feeble Steps* while you are travelling thro' this dark and painful Way, *take the Word of GOD as a Staff in your Hand*. Let *Books*, and *mortal*

al Friends, now *do their laſt Office* for you. *Call*, if you can, *ſome experienced Chriſtian*, who has *felt the Power of the Word of* GOD upon his own Heart; and let him *bring the Scripture*, and *turn you* to ſome of *thoſe precious Promiſes*, which have been *the Food* and *Rejoicing* of his own Soul. It is *with this View*, that I may *carry the good Office* I am now engaged in *as far as poſſible*, I ſhall here *give you a Collection* of a few ſuch *admirable Scriptures*, each of them *infinitely more valuable than Thouſands of Gold and Silver* (d). And to convince you of *the Degree in which I eſteem them*, I will take the Freedom to add, that *I deſire*, they may (if GOD give an Opportunity,) *be read over to me*, as I lie *on my dying Bed*, with *ſhort Intervals* between them; that I may *pauſe upon each*, and *renew* ſomething of *that delightful Reliſh* which, I bleſs GOD, I have *often found in them*. May *your Soul* and *mine* be then *compoſed to a ſacred Silence*, (what ever be the Commotion of Animal Nature,) while *the Voice of* GOD *ſpeaks to us*, in Language which He *ſpake to his Servants of old*, or in which He *inſtructed them* how they ſhould *ſpeak to Him*, in Circumſtances of *the greateſt Extremity!*

§. 11. CAN any more Encouragement be wanting, when He ſays, *Fear not, for I am with thee; be not diſmayed, for I am thy* GOD: *I will ſtrengthen thee, yea I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the Right Hand of my Righteouſneſs* (e). And *He is not a Man, that He ſhould lie, or the Son of Man, that He ſhould repent: Hath He ſaid, and ſhall He not do it? Or hath He ſpoken, and ſhall He not make it good* (f).——*The Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom ſhall I be afraid* (g)? *This* GOD *is our* GOD *for ever and ever: He will be our Guide even unto Death* (h). Therefore *tho' I walk thro' the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil; for Thou art with me, Thy Rod and Thy Staff, they comfort me* (i). *I have waited for Thy Salvation, Oh Lord* (k). *Oh continue Thy Loving Kindneſs unto them that know Thee, and Thy Righteouſneſs to*

(d) Pſal. cxix. 72. (e) Iſai. xli. 10. (f) Num. xxiii. 19.
(g) Pſal. xxvii. 1. (h) Pſal. xlviii. 14. (i) Pſal. xxiii. 4.
(k) Gen. xlix. 18.

the upright in Heart! For with Thee is the Fountain Life; in Thy Light ſhall we ſee Light (l). *Thou wi ſhew me the Path of Life; in Thy Preſence is Fulne of Joy, at Thy Right Hand there are Pleaſures for ever more* (m). *As for me, I ſhall behold Thy Face in Righte ouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with Th Likeneſs* (n). *For I know in whom I have believed, an am perſuaded that He is able to keep what I have com mitted to Him until that Day* (o). *Therefore my Hear is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth; my Fleſh alſo ſhall re in Hope* (p). *For if we believe, that Jeſus died, an roſe again, thoſe alſo that ſleep in Jeſus will GOD brin with him* (q).——*I give unto my Sheep Eternal Life* (ſaid JESUS, *the good Shepherd,*) *and they ſhall never pe riſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my Hand* (r). *This is the Will of Him that ſent me, that every one th believeth on me ſhould have Everlaſting Life; and I wil raiſe him up at the laſt Day* (s). *Let not your Heart b troubled; ye believe in GOD, believe alſo in me. In m Father's Houſe are many Manſions; if it were not ſo, I would have told you: I go to prepare a Place for you. And if I go and prepare a Place for you, I will com again, and receive you to myſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo* (t). *Go, tell my Brethren, I aſcend unt my Father and your Father, and to my GOD and you GOD* (u). *Father, I will that thoſe whom Thou ha given me, be with me where I am, that they may behol my Glory which Thou haſt given me; that the Lov wherewith Thou haſt loved me, may be in them, an I in them.* (x).—— *He that teſtifieth theſe Things ſaith Surely I come quickly. Amen: Even ſo come, Lord Jeſus* (y). *Oh Death, where is thy Sting? Oh Grave, where is th Victory? Thanks be to GOD, who giveth us the Victor thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* (z).

§. 12. THUS may *that GOD*, who *knows the Sou* of his Children *in all their Adverſities* (a), and *in whoſ Sight the Death of his Saints is precious* (b), chear an

(l) Pſal. xxxvi. 9, 10. (m) Pſal. xvi. 11. (n) Pſal. xvii. 1
(o) 2 Tim. i. 12. (p) Pſal. xvi. 9. (q) 1 Theſſ. iv. 14.
(r) John x. 28. (s) John vi. 40. (t) John xiv. 1, 2, 3.
(u) John xx. 17. (x) John xvii. 24, 26. (y) Rev. xxii. 20.
(z) 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. (a) Pſal. xxxi. 7. (b) Pſal. cxvi. 1

ſupport *you* and *me* in thoſe laſt Extremities of Nature! May he add *us* to the happy Number of *thoſe*, who have been *more than Conquerors* in Death! And may he give us *thoſe Supplies of His Spirit*, which may enable us to *pour out our departing Souls* in *ſuch Sentiments*, as thoſe I would now ſuggeſt; tho' we ſhould be *no longer able* to *utter Words*, or to *underſtand them* if they were to be *read to us!* Let us at leaſt *review them* with all *proper Affections* now, and lay up *one Prayer more* for that awful Moment! Oh that *this*, and *all we have ever offered* with Regard to it, may then *come in Remembrance before GOD* (c)!

A Meditation *and* Prayer, *ſuited to the Caſe of a dying* Christian.

"OH Thou *ſupream Ruler* of the *Viſible* and *Inviſible Worlds!* Thou *Sovereign* of *Life*, and of "*Death*; of *Earth*, and of *Heaven!* Bleſſed be Thy "Name, I have *often* been *taught to ſeek Thee*. And "now *once more* do I *pour my Soul*, my departing Soul "*unto Thee*. *Bow down Thy* gracious *Ear*, *Oh GOD*, "and let *my Cry come before Thee* with Acceptance!

"The *Hour is come*, when Thou wilt *ſeparate me* "*from this World*, with which I have been ſo long and "ſo familiarly acquainted, and *lead me to another*, as "yet unknown. Enable me, I beſeech Thee, to *make* "*the Exchange*, as becomes *a Child* of *Abraham*, who "*being called* of Thee *to receive an Inheritance*, *obeyed*, "*and went out*," tho' he *knew not* particularly *whither* "*he went* (d); as becomes *a Child* of *GOD*, who knows, "that, thro' Sovereign Grace, *it is his Father's good* "*Pleaſure to give him the Kingdom* (e)!

"I acknowledge, Oh Lord, *the Juſtice of that Sen*"*tence* by which I am expiring; and own *Thy Wiſdom* "and *Goodneſs*, in appointing *my Journey thro' this* "*gloomy Vale* which is now before me. Help me to "*turn it* into *the happy Occaſion* of *honouring Thee*, and "*adorning my Profeſſion!* and I will *bleſs the Pangs*, "by which *Thou art glorified*, and this *mortal* and *ſin*"*ful Part* of *my Nature* is *diſſolved*.

(c) Acts x. 4, 31. (d) Heb. xi. 8. (e) Luke xii. 32.

" *Gracious Father,* I would not *quit this Earth* of " Thine, and *this Houſe of Clay* in which I have " ſojourned during my Abode upon the Face of it, " *without my grateful Acknowledgments* to Thee, *for all* " *that* abundant *Goodneſs* which Thou haſt cauſed to " *paſs before me* here (f). With *my dying Breath* I bear " Witneſs to *Thy faithful Care.* I have *wanted no* " *good Thing* (g). I thank Thee, Oh my GOD, that " *this guilty, forfeited, unprofitable Life* was *ſo long* " *ſpared:* That it hath been *ſtill maintained* by ſuch a " Rich Variety of *Thy Bounty.* I thank Thee, that " Thou haſt made *this Beginning of my Exiſtence* ſo " *pleaſant* to me. I thank Thee, for *the Mercies* of " *my Days* and *Nights,* of *my Months* and *Years,* which " are now come to their Period: I thank Thee, for " *the Mercies* of *my Infancy,* and for *thoſe* of *my riper* " *Age*; for all *the agreeable Friends* which Thou haſt " given me in this Houſe of my Pilgrimage, *the Liv-* " *ing* and *the Dead*; for all *the Help* I have *received* " *from others,* and for all *the Opportunities* which Thou " haſt given me *of being helpful* to the *Bodies* or *Souls* of " *my Brethren* of Mankind. *Surely Goodneſs and Mercy* " *have followed me all the Days of my Life* (h), and " I have Reaſon to riſe *a thankful Gueſt* from the vari- " ous and pleaſant *Entertainments* with which *my Table* " has been *furniſhed* by Thee. Nor ſhall I have Rea- " ſon to *repine,* or to *grieve at quitting them:* For, " Oh my GOD, *are Thy Bounties exhauſted?* I know, " that *they are not.* I will not *wrong Thy Goodneſs* and " *Thy Faithfulneſs* ſo much, as to imagine, that becauſe " I am *going from Earth,* I am *going from Happineſs.* " I adore *Thy Mercy,* that Thou haſt taught me to *entre-* " *tain nobler Views* thro' *Jeſus Thy Son.* I bleſs Thee " with all the Powers of my Nature, that I ever *heard* " *of His Name,* and heard *of His Death:* And would " fain exert *a more vigorous Act* of *thankful Adoration,* " than in this broken State *I am capable of,* while I am " *extolling Thee,* for the Riches of *Thy Grace manifeſted* " *in Him*; for *His Inſtructions* and *His Example,* for " *His Blood* and *His Righteouſneſs,* and for that *Bleſſed* " *Spirit of Thine* which Thou haſt given me, to [illegible] " [illegible]

(f) Exod. xxxiii. 19. (g) Pſal. xxxiv. 10. (h) Pſal. xxiii. 6.

" *my ſinful Heart unto Thyſelf*, and to bring me *into the*
" *Bonds of Thy Covenant*; of that *Covenant*, which is
" *ordered in all Things and ſure* (i), and which *this*
" *Death*, tho' now ſeparating my Soul from my Body,
" ſhall *never be able to diſſolve*.

" I bleſs Thee, Oh Lord, that I am *not dying* in an
" *unregenerate* and *impenitent State*; but that Thou
" didſt graciouſly *awaken* and *convince me*; that Thou
" didſt *renew* and *ſanctify my Heart*, and didſt by Thy
" good Spirit *work in it* an unfeigned *Faith*, a real *Re-*
" *pentance*, and the *Beginning of a Divine Life*. I
" thank Thee, for *Miniſters* and *Ordinances*: I thank
" Thee, for my *Sabbaths* and my *Sacrament-Days*;
" for *the Weekly* and *Monthly Refreſhments* which they
" gave me: I thank Thee, for *the Fruits of Canaan*,
" which were ſent me *in the Wilderneſs*, and are now
" ſent me *on the Brink of Jordan*. I thank Thee, for
" *Thy bleſſed Word*, and for thoſe *exceeding rich and pre-*
" *cious Promiſes* of it, which *now lie* as a Cordial *warm*
" *at my Heart* in this chilling Hour; *Promiſes* of *Sup-*
" *port in Death*, and of *Glory beyond it*, and of *the*
" *Reſurrection of my Body* to *Everlaſting Life*. Oh my
" GOD, I firmly *believe them all*, great and wonder-
" ful as they are, and am *waiting for the Accompliſhment*
" *of them*, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt*; *in whom they are all*
" *Yea and Amen* (k). *Remember Thy Word unto Thy Ser-*
" *vant, on which Thou haſt cauſed me to hope* (l)! I
" covenanted with Thee, *not for Worldly Enjoyments*,
" which Thy Love taught me comparatively to deſpiſe;
" but *for Eternal Life*, as *the Gift of Thy Free Grace*
" *thro' Jeſus Chriſt my Lord* (m): And now permit me
" *in His Name* to enter *my humble Claim to it!* Permit
" me to conſign *this departing Spirit to Thine Hand*; for
" *Thou haſt redeemed it, Oh Lord GOD of Truth* (n)! *I*
" *am Thine: Save me* (o), and make me happy!

" But may I indeed preſume to ſay, *I am Thine?*
" Oh, GOD, now I am ſtanding *on the Borders of both*
" *Worlds*, now I view Things as *in the Light of Thy*
" *Preſence* and *of Eternity*, how *unworthy* do I appear,
" that *I ſhould be taken* to dwell *with Thy Angels* and
" *Saints*

(i) 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. (k) 2 Cor. i. 20. (l) Pſal. cxix. 49.
(m) Rom. vi. 23. (n) Pſal. xxxi. 5. (o) Pſal. cxix. 94.

" *Saints* in Glory! Alas, I have Reaſon to *look back* " *with deep Humiliation*, on a poor unprofitable *ſinful* " *Life*, in which I have *daily been deſerving* to be *caſt* " *into Hell*. But I have *this one comfortable Reflection*, " that I have *fled to the Croſs of Chriſt*; and I now *re-* " *new my Application to it*. To think of *appearing be-* " *fore GOD in ſuch an imperfect Righteouſneſs as my* " *own*, were *Ten Thouſand Times worſe than Death*. No, " Lord! I come unto Thee *as a Sinner*; but as a Sin- " ner, *who has believed in Thy Son* for *Pardon* and *Life*: " I fall down before Thee *as a guilty polluted Wretch*; " but Thou haſt *made Him* to be unto Thy People for " *Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs*, for *Sanctification and Redemp-* " *tion* (p). Let me have *my Lot* among *the Followers of* " *Jeſus!* Treat me, as Thou *treateſt thoſe* who are *His* " *Friends* and *His Brethren!* for Thou knoweſt, *my Soul* " has *loved Him*, and *truſted Him*, and ſolemnly *ventured* " *itſelf* on the Security of *His Goſpel*. And *I know, in* " *whom I have believed* (q). The *Infernal Lion* may " *attempt to diſmay me* in this awful Paſſage; but *I re-* " *joice*, that I am *in the Hands of the good Shepherd* (r), " and *I defy all my Spiritual Enemies*, in a chearful *De-* " *pendance on His faithful Care*. I lift up my Eyes " and my Heart *to Him*, who *was dead and is alive* " *again*; *and behold, He lives for evermore, and hath* " *the Keys of Death and of the unſeen World* (s). Bleſſed " JESUS, I *die by Thine Hand*, and I *fear no Harm* " from *the Hand of a Saviour!* I fear not *that Death*, " which is allotted to me *by the Hand of my deareſt* " *Lord*, who *Himſelf died* to make it *ſafe* and *happy*. I " come, *Lord*, I come, *not only with a willing*, but with " *a joyful Conſent*. I thank Thee, that Thou *remem-* " *bereſt me for Good*; that Thou art *breaking my Chains*, " and calling me to *the glorious Liberty of the Children of* " *GOD* (t). I thank Thee, that Thou wilt *no longer* " *permit me* to live *at a Diſtance from Thine Arms*; but " after *this long Abſence*, wilt have me *at Home*, at Home " *for ever*.

" My feeble Nature faints *in the View of that Glory*, " which is now *dawning upon me*: But Thou *knoweſt* " *how*,

(p) 1 Cor. i. 30. (q) 2 Tim. i. 12. (r) John x. 11, 28.
(s) Rev. i. 18. (t) Rom. viii. 21.

" *how*, gracious Lord, *to let it in* upon my Soul *by juſt* " *Degrees*, and to *make Thy Strength perfect in my Weak-* " *neſs* (u). Once more, *for the laſt Time*, would I *look* " *down* on *this poor World* which I am going to quit, " and breathe out *my dying Vows* for *its Proſperity*, and " *that of Thy Church* in it. I have *loved it*, Oh Lord, " as *a living Member of the Body*; and I *love it to the* " *laſt*. I humbly beſeech Thee therefore, that Thou " wilt *guard it*, and *purify it*, and *unite it more and* " *more!* Send down *more of Thy Bleſſed Spirit* upon it, " even *the Spirit of Wiſdom*, of *Holineſs*, and of *Love*; " till in due Time *the Wilderneſs be turned into a* " *Garden of the Lord* (w), and *all Fleſh ſhall ſee Thy* " *Salvation* (x)!

" And as for me, *bear me*, Oh my Heavenly Father, " *on the Wings of everlaſting Love* to that *peaceful*, that " *holy*, that *joyous Abode*, which *Thy Mercy has prepared* " for me, and which *the Blood of my Redeemer hath* " *purchaſed!* Bear me *to the general Aſſembly and Church* " *of the Firſt born, to the innumerable Company of An-* " *gels, and to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect* (y)! " And whatever *this Fleſh may ſuffer*, let *my ſteady Soul* " be delightfully *fixed* on *that Glory* to which it is riſ- " ing! Let *Faith* perform *its laſt Office* in an honoura- " ble Manner! Let *my few remaining Moments* on Earth " *be ſpent for Thy Glory*; and ſo let me *aſcend*, with " *Love in my Heart*, and *Praiſe on my* faultering *Tongue*, " to *the World* where *Love* and *Praiſe* ſhall be *compleat!* " Be this *my laſt Song* on Earth, which I am *going to* " *tune* in Heaven; *Bleſſing, and Honour, and Glory, and* " *Power be unto Him that ſitteth on the Throne, and to* " *the Lamb for ever and ever* (z)! Amen."

(u) 2 Cor. xii. 9. (w) Iſai. li. 3. (x) Luke iii. 6.
(y) Heb. xii. 22, 23. (z) Rev. v. 13.

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